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ARTICLE I.—*Religious Endowments.*

THE legal term *mortmain* is frequently used, especially in common discourse, and sometimes in books, in a mistaken sense. It is sometimes confounded by well informed men, and even by lawyers, with another and distinct subject. Mortmain, in strict propriety, means the acquisition or holding of real estate by a corporation or body politic, having perpetual succession. The popular meaning of the word is the vesting of land or other property, either in a corporation or in individuals, in such form as that the produce or beneficial interest may become permanently applicable to religious or charitable purposes. The proper legal term descriptive of property thus situated, is Charities or Charitable Uses.

It may be useful to deduce succinctly the history of these two subjects. In so doing, perhaps, the best explanation can be given of the general principles upon which religious and charitable endowments are based in the jurisprudence of England and this country.

The prohibition to alienate in mortmain, or, in other words, to give or grant to a corporation, existed in the Roman law. Diocletian gave this rescript: Collegium, si nullo speciali pri-

ART. III.—*Recent Doctrinal and Ecclesiastical Conflicts in Connecticut.*

1. *God in Christ*; by Horace Bushnell, 1849.
2. *Christ in Theology*; by Horace Bushnell, 1851.
3. *Remonstrance and Complaint of the Association of Fairfield West to the Hartford Central Association*, 1850.
4. *Appeal of the Association of Fairfield West to the Associated Ministers connected with the General Association of the State of Connecticut*, 1852.
5. *Complaint against the Hartford Central Association*, signed by fifty-two Ministers, and presented to the General Association of Connecticut at its meeting in Waterbury, June, 1853.
6. *Memorial of the Hartford Central Association*, presented to the same body.
7. *Answer to said Memorial with Rejoinder to the same*, published in the Religious Herald, Hartford, July 21, 1853.
8. *Minutes of the General Association of Connecticut* from 1848 to 1853.

BETWEEN New England Congregationalists and the principal Presbyterian bodies of this country, the most intimate relations have always subsisted. This mutual affinity has shown itself in all the forms in which it is possible for the "communion of saints" to display itself between bodies of Christians organized under different modes of Church polity. This essential unity has long been formally recognized by the mutual interchange of delegates in their annual ecclesiastical assemblies. Nor has this been a mere empty ceremony. In ways the most decisive, it has proved itself to be the token of a real fellowship. Ministers have been called and translated from one of these denominations to posts in the other, as if they were to all intents one communion. Candidates for the ministry, too, have resorted to the colleges and theological seminaries on either side of their own denominational lines, with great freedom, as convenience or other supposed advantages might incline them. Members of Congregational churches going to reside where there was a

Presbyterian, but no Congregational church, have, as a matter of course, united with the Presbyterian, in preference to any Baptist, Methodist, or Episcopal church. Presbyterians, in like manner, *mutatis mutandis*, have, of course, become members of Congregational churches.

For a long time the circumstances of these two great Christian bodies in the country were such, that their substantial unity in Christian doctrine and life was mostly in the foreground, while their differences in Church polity were kept more in the background, in their consciousness, their mutual relations, and intercourse. They felt all the comforts and attractions of the former. The occasions were rare in which they suffered chafing and alienation from the latter. As the Western territories began to be settled by emigration from the old Eastern States, these two great Calvinistic communities, true to their historic life and instincts, contributed a large quota of these enterprising and adventurous pioneers. The result was great numbers of small settlements, the germs of future towns and cities, in which was a mixture of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Professing one faith, they had been accustomed to different forms of Church government. But this difference had not been made to assume any marked prominence or importance, because no experience had yet proved it irreconcilable, or an insuperable obstacle to union. On the other hand, the all-preponderating motive to union was, that, in many cases, neither class separately could sustain Christian institutions, while united, they could, at best, even with missionary aid, form but a weak, struggling congregation. Hence arose the celebrated Plan of Union, in which these differences as to polity were so accommodated that Congregationalists and Presbyterians could be united in one church or ecclesiastical organization, *each retaining his own peculiarities in the actual administration of Church government*. Congregational committee-men became members of the highest judicatories of the Presbyterian Church, and took part in deciding the most fundamental questions relating to her faith and order. This, however, caused little practical difficulty, so long as all parts of this extended but anomalous organization were true to the doctrinal standards, which had been the only publicly avowed creed of both the Congregational and Presbyterian

communions. But when a powerful party arose, determined to legalize in the Church a latitudinarian system repugnant to the distinctive features of this creed, the Plan of Union at once excited uneasiness and jealousy. The question, who had a constitutional right to vote in the assemblies of the Church, became a vital one of self-preservation. It was speedily arraigned and annulled as unconstitutional. On this issue, in form, but on the graver issue of serious doctrinal differences underlying it, in fact, as is well known, a formidable secession left the Presbyterian Church. This issue has proved to be singularly unfortunate for our New-school brethren. The Congregationalists, whose supposed wrongs inflicted by these summary proceedings they sought to redress, by rallying a new organization, have deserted them upon this question, and quite outdo Old-school Presbyterians in their dislike and denunciations of the Plan of Union. Almost any system of church government will work well enough, as long as there is doctrinal unity and mutual confidence and love. But when serious division in opinion and feeling arises, then men must know under what regimen they are living, and any vague, hybrid system, which has no certain powers, and confers no certain rights, is intolerable. Whether constitutional or not, it is not necessary here to decide; one thing is certain, the Plan of Union is outgrown, by general consent of Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Whatever may be the relative merits of Congregationalism and Presbyterianism, experience has sufficiently proved, that in those exigencies which put any system of polity to the test, their amalgamation is not endurable. In the language of Judge Gibson they are as "immiscible as water and oil." But, while this has been found impracticable, yet its adoption for so long a period, is a striking proof of the degree of substantial unity and recognized fellowship that have obtained between these Christian bodies. It is only in illustration of this fact that we have dwelt upon it. As to all other forms of manifesting this fellowship, they still remain, except so far as innovations and corruptions in doctrine or order in various quarters, or the heat of recent controversy or rivalry may have abridged their operation. And so far as this last cause is concerned, the breach seems to have be-

come wider between the Congregationalists and the New-school Presbyterians than the Old. May the great Head of the Church so order things, that without infringing truth and righteousness, it grow narrower and not wider!

This intimate communion between Presbyterians and Congregationalists has arisen from various causes. First and most fundamental is their agreement as to the system of doctrine taught in the Bible, and underlying all genuine piety. This was the system set forth in all the Reformed and Puritan symbols, the only system which, until a recent period, friends thought to honour, or foes to reproach, with the name of Calvinism: the system drawn out more minutely in the Westminster and Savoy Confessions of Faith, and more summarily in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. The former is the doctrinal standard in the Presbyterian Church, explicitly professed by all her ministers and officers.

The Westminster or Savoy, which on all doctrinal points is identical with it, not only in matter, but with scarcely a variation in language, is the only creed ever adopted by any Synod of the New England churches representing the entire communion, and authorized to declare its faith. The first Synod held at Cambridge in 1648, voted unanimously: "This Synod having perused and considered, with much gladness of heart, and thankfulness to God, the Confession of Faith, published of late by the reverend Assembly in England, do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious in all matters of faith." They then proceed to say, that they except to it only in matters of church government and discipline. Again, in their second and last Synod at Boston, in 1680, they say: "It is well known that as to matters of doctrine we agree with other reformed churches." "We have (for the main) chosen to express ourselves in the words of those reverend assemblies, (the Westminster and Savoy,) that so we might not only with one heart, but with one mouth, glorify God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." At a later period, the churches of Connecticut, by their representatives assembled at Saybrook, in 1708, for the purpose of fixing a Confession of Faith and platform of government for the churches of the colony, unanimously adopted the Savoy Confession, which had been previously adopted by

the Synod of all the New England churches, together with that system of Church government which has been peculiar to that State, and to which we may hereafter advert. They declare it "to have been the constant faith of the churches in this colony from the foundation of them." That this was true, not only of the Connecticut, but all the New England churches till this date and long afterwards, appears not only from these public confessions, but from the catechisms, sermons, theological treatises, and every other manifestation of their faith during that era.

Although more recently innovations upon the doctrines of these confessions have appeared in a descending series, labelled after the names of their inventors, with the uncouth titles of Hopkinsianism, Emmonism, Taylorism, (shall we yet be obliged to add Bushnellism?) still, these have never commanded such a number of open adherents, as to induce any rejection or alteration of these ancient standards. They are still the only formal confessions of faith ever made by the New England churches as a whole, the only avowed and unretracted faith of the congregational communion in New England. The only qualification to this remark is, that the Saybrook Platform says that it is sufficient if a man acknowledge either the Westminster or Savoy Confessions, the Assembly's Catechism, Shorter or Longer, or the doctrinal articles of the Church of England. So far from disowning, they have in various ways reaffirmed their adherence to these formularies. Thus the General Association of Connecticut, as appears from their Minutes for 1849, voted in that year that "we do, (and can hardly too often) reaffirm our faith in the great doctrines of the gospel *as embodied in our Confession of Faith.*" Hence it has been well said, by one who is not obnoxious to the imputation of narrowness or bigotry; "This is the authorized faith of the Congregational churches, the only faith which has ever been professed by the churches assembled by their pastors and representatives in synod or council. And this has been not only the publicly professed faith of our churches, but it has been the real or implied faith of every church calling itself Congregational.\*"

\* Budington's History of the First Church in Charlestown, p. 151.

Another index of unity in doctrine between the two denominations, and which tended more powerfully than all else to make them substantially one in feeling and in fact, was the universal use of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism in the religious instruction of children. Until a comparatively recent period, all pious parents in both communions taught this admirable summary of Christian doctrine to their children. Much was also done by pastors and in schools, in teaching and explaining it to youth. It is still the only recognized manual for instructing youth in Christian doctrine among Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Their ecclesiastical bodies often commend it, and urge to greater fidelity in the use of it. And wherever faith in its doctrines and zeal for God have not died out, much is still done in both communions by parents, pastors, teachers, and Sabbath schools, to make the rising generation familiar with it. So far as this influence extends, it must promote unity in doctrine, and in the whole development of Christian life and experience.

Closely connected with all this, is an agreement as to the true doctrine of the Church, (notwithstanding differences as to its external organization) as against the fundamental principle of Popery and Prelacy. They agree that the Church is the communion of saints: that the matter of the Church is men considered as already regenerate and believing, and deny that the Church exists before believers as a divine corporation and repository of saving power, from which, and by union to which, men first derive the new-creating grace of life.

Aside then from questions of ecclesiastical order, this identity of principle in regard to all that directly moulds the Christian character, produced such a similarity of Christian life, that the ministers and people of these two Christian communities readily coalesced, wherever convenience favoured their union. Nor did their differences as to government loom up into prominence, until the upspring of lax doctrines raised the question, which system best guarded its own creeds, or offered the largest license to latitudinarians.

Besides this, a considerable portion of the first ministers of New England were Presbyterians in principle. They had been so in England. Even Congregationalists themselves, as not

only their leading writers, but the Cambridge Platform itself shows, made ruling elders an essential requisite to a duly organized church. Their powers were not only co-ordinate with, but superior to those of the body of communicants, inasmuch as it devolved on them to initiate and direct all acts of discipline and government.\*

That great Congregational luminary, Thomas Hooker, first pastor of Hartford, is said to have described their prerogatives by calling them "a speaking aristocracy in the face of a silent democracy." He also laboured incessantly for some union of the churches under one organization. One of his last solemn sayings was, "we must agree upon constant meetings of ministers, and settle the consociation of churches, or we are undone." The Saybrook Platform provides for this. Trumbull pronounces it a compromise between those who were "*nearly Presbyterian,*" on the one side, and those who were "verging towards independency" on the other. Till within a recent period the common appellation of Congregationalists in New England was *Presbyterian*. Nor has it yet become obsolete. The consequence has been, that as all portions of our country have been largely peopled by emigrants from New England, they have generally found, until the recent growth of congregational propagandism, and notwithstanding this, do even now, to a great extent, find, not only a welcome, but a congenial religious home in the Presbyterian Church. They have contributed a large constituent part of her ministry and members, while, *vice versa*, many of her own members and ministers have formed happy and edifying connections with the Congregational churches of New England.

We have, at the risk of wearying our readers, thus particularly explained the close connection between the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies, by way of introduction to the principal topic of our article, because it shows the deep stake we have in the matter. Whatever transpires in any branch of the Church is a legitimate subject of interest and consideration to every other branch. For they are all members of one body, and partake of a common life. If one member suffer, all suffer, and

\* Cambridge Platform, Chap. x.



if one rejoice, all rejoice. No one part can be independent of any other, or unaffected by, or, if right, indifferent to its fortunes. But this is pre-eminently true of all doctrinal developments in either of the Congregational or Presbyterian bodies. Their affinities and their intercourse are so close that, whether they will or no, they exercise a strong reciprocal influence. Doctrinal principles have seldom appeared in one, without speedily contending for a foothold in the other. This has been true of the metaphysical solutions of the high points of doctrine attempted successively by Hopkins, Emmons, and Taylor. Then again, the "new measures" in which some of these diluted schemes sought to work themselves out in New York were speedily transported to New England. And we already see one great principle on which Congregationalists and New-school Presbyterians made issue with the Old-school, viz: *that the Church as such* should conduct her own Missions, and that each *branch of it as such* should provide publications for the due exposition and enforcement of its own system, working like a mighty leaven in each of those bodies.

All branches of the great Presbyterian and Congregational families have the deepest interest in the final disposition of that great question which has agitated the Congregational ministry of Connecticut for some years past; which has made them a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men; and which, so far as action through existing ecclesiastical organizations there is concerned, is understood to have reached a finality. That question has been no other than this: "Shall the peculiar opinions upon the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, and Justification, advanced by Dr. Bushnell in his book entitled 'God in Christ,' and re-asserted and vindicated by him in another book entitled 'Christ in Theology,' be legalized or outlawed among them?" This is very far from being the question whether, if a minister, in his private speculations, gets bewildered into some crude theory on the Trinity, or incarnation, by attempting to fly without wings above the proper level of the human intellect, he is therefore to be disowned. It is the question, whether a systematic speculating away of the whole series of doctrines specified above, carried to the scornful rejection of even the lowest form of the doctrine of vicarious atonement,

and the use of the most contemptuous epithets in regard to the accepted forms of all these and other fundamental Christian truths, and this, too, in *the form of open propagandism* through the press, shall be consistent with good standing in the ministry. Moreover, it is not the question whether these things shall be ground of discipline in a private church-member, but whether he who propagates them shall be countenanced and upheld in their ranks, by the Congregational ministry of Connecticut, as a safe Christian teacher. After an amount of effort and sacrifice on the part of faithful men, rarely possible in any similar case, to exclude these heresies from their connection, what is the practical result? While we trust that their faithful testimony will be blessed of God to check the evil, we fear that, so far as this precise point is concerned, their labours have been in vain.

In order to understand the import of all the ecclesiastical movements on this subject, it will be necessary to explain such peculiarities of the Saybrook Platform as are implicated in them. That instrument, besides providing for associations which consist exclusively of ministers, and are the only permanent ecclesiastical bodies beyond single churches generally known among Congregationalists, provides also for consociations conterminous with these associations. These consociations are confederations of the churches in a given district, each church being represented by its pastor, and a lay-delegate, at their meetings. These consociations are charged with the duty of acting on "all occasions ecclesiastical"\* within their limits, that cannot properly be met by a single church. They are, in short, permanent councils, doing for their churches what is done for Congregational churches elsewhere by councils either mutual or *ex parte*, chosen by one or both the parties for the occasion, and expiring with it. The only powers committed to the associations are the licensing of ministers, advising vacant churches, forming a General Association, composed of delegates sent by them, together with the following:

"ART. XIII. The said associate pastors shall take notice of any among themselves that may be accused of heresy unto, or cognizable by them, examine the matter carefully, and *if they*

\* Saybrook Platform, Art. 2.

*find just occasion*, shall direct to the calling of the council, (*i. e.* consociation,) where such offenders shall be duly proceeded against."

This makes the association a grand jury of inquest, to determine whether there is such *prima facie* evidence of guilt in the case of an accused consociated pastor, as to warrant putting him on trial before his consociation.

Soon after the publication of Dr. Bushnell's *God in Christ*, as our readers doubtless recollect, it was condemned, as subverting some of the first principles of the gospel already mentioned, by the accredited organs of doctrinal opinion in nearly every evangelical denomination in the country. This unanimity cannot be explained unless there was such *prima facie* evidence of heresy as to demand a trial.

Under these circumstances, the Hartford Central Association, to which Dr. Bushnell belonged, examined the case for the purpose of ascertaining if there was justifiable cause for putting him on trial.

After having thus examined the case, and heard Dr. Bushnell's "Vindication of himself from the charge of heresy brought against him from various quarters," they adopted and published to the world the following decision in the premises:

"We are satisfied that whatever errors the book may contain, it furnishes no sufficient ground for instituting a judicial process with him.

"We regret his departure in some of his statements from the formulas of the Church. We adhere to those formulas; but we regard him, notwithstanding the exceptions he has taken to them, as holding whatever is essential to the scheme of doctrine which they embody.

"He could not, in our view, be properly or justly subjected to the charge of heresy and a consequent trial, or be denied the confidence of his brethren in the ministry."

This decision, as might be expected, created wide-spread distress and alarm. It was not so much that the man, Dr. Bushnell, was cleared, who personally was of small consequence in the matter: but the *principles* on which he was acquitted, which had the nature and effect of law, applicable to all similar cases. While this decision stood, that Association could not

consistently refuse licensure, ordination, or confidence, to any man on account of his holding the opinions advanced by Dr. Bushnell. And so long as the decision was assented to by tacit acquiescence on the part of other associations, it was presumptively in accordance with the standard of orthodoxy recognized in the State. What then was to be done by that class of ministers, who would no sooner countenance such teachings, than (as Dr. Hall said at Danbury) "poison the wells out of which their children drink?" What could they do? The General Association is not a judicial body—nor is there any body having appellate jurisdiction over the doings of a district association. But one remedy remained. 1. Fraternal argument and remonstrance with the Hartford Central Association by sister associations. 2. If this proved unavailing, to bring the case before the General Association, on the ground that every society, and especially every Christian association, must, in the nature of things, be the judge of its membership, and have the power to deal with and exclude from its privileges those persons or constituencies that subvert the very basis of the union and compact. Few would pretend that the General Association could not exclude an association of avowed deists or infidels from its connection, although not an appellate, or, in form, a judicial body. In conformity to these principles, measures have been pursued with a constancy, fidelity, and sacrifice, seldom equalled, to procure by these circuitous, and therefore laborious, processes, the removal of the heresy from connection with that body. These, at length, ended in a formal complaint against the Hartford Central Association before the General Association, at its last meeting, signed by fifty-two ministers, among whom were, Drs. Day, Woolsey, Hewit, Calhoun, Tyler, Thompson, Cleveland, Hall, Atwater, and others. As this narrates in the most concise form the whole history of the case, and shows the real issues presented to the General Association, while the names attached to it are a sufficient guaranty for the truth of its statements, we shall lay before our readers the whole of it, following its statement of the decision of Hartford Central, already quoted, both as in itself deserving of permanent record, and as the shortest way of putting the principal facts in the case in their possession. They represent,

“That the Fairfield West Association being in common with vast numbers in and out of our State, dissatisfied with this decision, addressed to the Hartford Central Association a remonstrance and complaint, in which they undertook to show, and in our opinion did show, by copious extracts from the book in question, that its author had plainly denied several of the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, and entreated their brethren to reconsider their doings and redress the injury which their decision had done to the cause of Christ, a copy of which is herewith submitted.

“That the Hartford Central Association made a brief reply, in which they declined to reconsider their decision until new evidence of a decisive character should be presented, while they offered no proofs or arguments to overthrow or invalidate the allegations and reasonings of the remonstrance from Fairfield West Association, a copy of which reply is herewith submitted.

“That hereupon the Fairfield West Association published said remonstrance and answer, and sent them to all the ministers of the State, with a circular letter to each of the District Associations, requesting them to meet and consider the subject, and let them know the conclusion to which they came.

“That the Fairfield West Association received answers from these bodies, some of which expressed entire concurrence with them, and all, as far as they expressed any positive opinion, sustained their position, that this was a case in regard to which judicial proceedings ought to be instituted.

“That as the question had been raised by the apologists of Dr. Bushnell, what doctrines are fundamental in respect to the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, and Justification, the Fairfield West Association, by their memorial, brought the whole subject before the General Association, at its meeting in Litchfield, in June, 1850, and asked that body to declare what are deemed and treated as fundamental doctrines on the points in question, among the ministers and churches of this State: and that thereupon the General Association, with great unanimity, declared the doctrines of the Westminster Catechism on these points fundamental, and the denial of them heresy; they also said, ‘we regard it as the right of any of our District Associations to remonstrate with any other Association in respect to

any proceedings which are thought to involve the faith and purity of our churches, or to bring reproach on the associated clergy of the State.'

'We regard it as the duty of any Association receiving such a remonstrance, to reconsider the case in question; and if they do not reverse their former action, to use their best endeavours to satisfy the complaining Association in respect to the proceedings so complained of.'

"That after waiting a sufficient time for the Hartford Central, of their own motion, if they saw cause, to adjust their doings to this standard so set forth by the General Association, and finding that they neglected to do so, the Fairfield West Association, in October, 1850, addressed to them a second letter, requesting them to compare the teachings of Dr. Bushnell with the declaration of the General Association, and either reverse their decision aforesaid, or use their best endeavours to satisfy them (the Fairfield West Association,) that their allegations were unfounded.

"That in May 1851, the Hartford Central sent back a reply to this letter. In this they utterly declined to reverse or even reconsider their proceedings, or to discuss the allegations made. They further said, 'the question is not, as to what doctrines are fundamental to the Christian religion, for on that point there is no controversy, but as to what are the essential elements of the doctrines conceded to be fundamental, and how far these are retained in Dr. Bushnell's book.' Thus the real issue, as stated by themselves, is, what is essential in the great doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement and Justification? and are those things which Dr. Bushnell has denied on these subjects, essential gospel truths? and are they, or are they not longer to be deemed and treated as such amongst us? In other words, the question is, whether the declaration as to fundamental doctrines made at Litchfield, is to be so interpreted amongst us, that they are to be considered as conforming to it in good faith, who avow the teachings complained of in Dr. Bushnell's book? And this is the real question at the bottom of all others, now agitating the ministry and churches in connection with this painful subject.

"That, at about the same time, Dr. Bushnell published

another volume, entitled 'Christ in Theology,' containing the substance of 'his vindication of himself' before the Hartford Central Association, from the charges of heresy brought against him from various quarters. That, on examination, this book appeared to reaffirm in an offensive manner, the heresies complained of in the first—particularly that it appears to us to teach,

"1. That the orthodox are not justified in maintaining that there are Three Persons or even distinctions in the Divine Nature, or essence, and that this doctrine as commonly held among us is 'plain tritheism.'

"2. That there is no evidence that Christ had a human soul, and no warrant for believing it.

"3. That if God could accept the sufferings of the just for the unjust, it would 'indicate in him the confusion or loss of all moral distinctions;' and that the 'whole scheme of suffering in Christ substituted directly for penal suffering in us, is a bare assumption, justified by no scriptural authority whatever.'

"4. That although in the author's judgment the doctrine of vicarious atonement is thus absurd, and would indicate in God, if it were true, 'the confusion or loss of all moral distinctions,' yet God has set forth the work of Christ under this form, and as such, calls upon ministers to preach it, and men to receive it.

"5. That our accepted systems of religious doctrine give us not the gospel, but a 'dull mechanical contrivance of theology,' in which the gospel is 'reduced to two dry factors,' to a 'speculative figment, cold and dry,' to 'petty formulas,' 'specks,' 'fragments,' 'minima' of truth; and that there is reason to suspect that 'what we call our Christianity is the product of the organizing force of human dogmatism.'

"6. Accordingly, in March, 1852, the Fairfield West Association issued an 'Appeal to the Associated Ministers of this State connected with the General Association,' in which, after a full narrative of the proceedings aforesaid, they undertook to prove, and in our opinion, did prove, by copious extracts from the volume in question, that it contains not only the above mentioned, but numerous other false and dangerous sentiments,

and announced their intention to bring the whole subject before the General Association.

“That accordingly, the whole matter was so submitted by Fairfield West Association to the General Association, at its last meeting in Danbury, June, 1852.—That hereupon, the General Association with great unanimity adopted the following minute:

‘That it is the opinion of this General Association, that, in the present state of public feeling in regard to the publications referred to in the memorial from the Association of Fairfield West, all the parties concerned should, in the exercise of Christian charity, remove, so far as possible, every obstacle whether real or supposed, to a full and fair investigation, according to our ecclesiastical rules, and we do hereby advise to such a course.’

“That before it was practicable to bring charges against Dr. Bushnell, with a view to his trial before his (the Hartford North) Consociation, in accordance with this vote, the North Church in Hartford, withdrew from that Consociation, thus taking their pastor from its jurisdiction.

“That the Hartford North Consociation, at its annual meeting on the 4th Tuesday in September, 1852, passed the following resolutions:

‘*Resolved*, 1. That we have received with surprise and regret, the communication from the North Church in Hartford, notifying us, that they have withdrawn from Consociation.

‘*Resolved*, 2. That the action of said church, especially if, as it seems to us, it was taken for the purpose of screening its pastor from an expected trial before this body, is in our view irregular, uncourteous, and eminently unhappy in its tendency.

‘*Resolved*, 3. That these resolutions be sent by the Register to the Clerk of the North Church in Hartford.’

“That said church has not retraced its steps, but still remains, with its pastor, out of the jurisdiction of Consociation.

“That Dr. Bushnell has not retracted the offensive doctrines complained of, while he yet continues a member of the Hartford Central Association in good standing; and that this body



still adheres to the votes complained of in the foregoing Memorial of Fairfield West, viz: that the sentiments he has taught in his books aforementioned, 'furnish no sufficient ground for instituting a judicial process with him:' that 'he could not justly be subjected to the charge of heresy and a consequent trial, or denied the confidence of his brethren in the ministry;' that he 'holds whatever is essential to the scheme of doctrine' embodied in 'the formulas of the Church.' That while these votes stand, the idea of bringing charges with a view to his trial before his Association, is preposterous.

"That all due labour has been used to induce the Hartford Central Association to rescind the aforementioned votes, and no recourse remains for remedying the evil, but in the action of the General Association.

"That the General Association cannot decline to interpose in the case, without thus signifying to the world, either that it deems the errors of Dr. Bushnell non-essential, or that it has no power to deal with or exclude from its connection and fellowship, those who hold or propagate fundamental error, and persist therein.

"To take the former ground, is to deny that to be essential which we most solemnly believe to be such, and which has ever been the basis of fellowship in evangelical communions.

"To take the latter ground, is virtually to strip the General Association of all just claim to be regarded and treated as a Christian body; to render its certificates of membership and good standing worthless; its delegations to other Christian bodies an imposture, and its bond of union a nullity. No such theory can endure the slightest examination. To avow it, would be to forfeit the confidence and respect of other Christian bodies and of the world, and would contradict the whole past history of your body.

"We therefore COMPLAIN against the Hartford Central Association, that in the action aforesaid it has subverted the doctrinal basis of our union and fellowship as a General Association. We ask for a suitable redress of this grievance at your hands; and insist, that without such redress, membership and certificates of membership in this body are not even *prima facie* evidence of soundness in the faith."

Let us stop a moment, and see how the parties thus far appear, in this statement of facts, unquestioned in any quarter. 1. The complainants are manifestly open, bold, straight-forward. There is no disguise, no shrinking from the fullest discovery and exposure. They demand a thorough sifting and righteous disposal of the whole case. They, with extraordinary pains-taking, collate the proofs that the fundamental doctrines of the gospel have been cast away. They once and again call upon the Hartford Central either to retrace their steps, or to explain to them how they can shield such principles in the ministry, without sacrificing fundamental truth. The Hartford Central will not do the first. They "utterly decline" to do the last. But would they have thus declined under the pressure laid upon them, if they were conscious of the strength of their cause? Their first plea, and, until the last occasion on which they were arraigned before the General Association at Waterbury, their only plea, has been want of jurisdiction. Dr. Porter even claimed at Danbury, in 1852, in defence of his body, that if an Association should declare themselves Deists or Universalists, the General Association had no right to exclude their delegates! This idea was never, however, advanced but once. It in reality operated as a *reductio ad absurdum*, to prove to the satisfaction of all, the existence of the jurisdiction which he denied. Finally, when through these persevering exertions, a trial of Dr. Bushnell was impending before his Consociation, he and his church fled from its jurisdiction. These things speak for themselves.

But when formal complaint was made against the Hartford Central, at the last meeting of the General Association at Waterbury, that body adopted a new course. It sent up a memorial, not only denying jurisdiction, but also endeavouring to meet the charges of heresy laid against Dr. Bushnell in the complaint. But here again, although they had printed copies for distribution, they, we are credibly informed, refused to circulate it, when publicly requested, or to give a single copy to the complainants, when privately requested, even the night before, or until it was publicly read on the last day of the session, when there was no opportunity for a close and accurate examination of it. We do not wonder. The very show

of a defence, and of invalidating the charges of heresy, without allowing time to sift it, doubtless produced some confusion of mind in all that dubious portion of the body who had not thoroughly mastered the subject. Had there been opportunity to expose its true character, it seems to us that it would have been looked upon as furnishing the strongest confirmation of the truth of those charges. It fully explains why its authors had before been so shy of facing the merits of the case. We suppose this to be the best defence that can be given, as it is the only one that has appeared, and comes from accused parties capable of doing full justice to their cause. And as the whole case turns upon it, we shall inquire what proof they have adduced of Dr. Bushnell's soundness, or to weaken the vast amount of evidence that he holds the heresies imputed to him, arrayed in the documents of Fairfield West Association?

1. With regard to the Trinity, they do not deny that he teaches in manner and form as the complainants allege he has taught in regard to it. They could not. The proofs are too manifold and unambiguous. They quote a passage in which Dr. Bushnell says that as the persons of the Trinity are "incidental to the process of revelation," and since God has "an eternally self-revealing nature, we may well enough assume on that ground, if on no other, that he is always to be known as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."—(*Christ in Theology*, p. 168.) But what of all this, after his manifold denials of any Trinity in the divine nature, and his open avowal of doubt (p. 167) "whether the distinct personality of the word, when regarded as the Son, is referable to the incarnation?" We think it would have looked more like a serious attempt to do the subject justice, had they at least noticed the following answer to this plea, in the "Appeal of Fairfield West," pp. 29, 30.

"Nor does he (Dr. Bushnell) elevate his dogma above Sabellianism, by telling us that God has an eternally self-revealing nature, while he contends that we can KNOW nothing of any Trinity not 'generated in time' by the process of actual revelation. What we know nothing about cannot be an article of faith. Did Sabellius or any theist ever deny that God has eternally that nature whereby he not only reveals himself, but creates, upholds, and governs all things? Withal, a trinity

made by revelation can be eternal only by virtue of an eternal revelation. This is possible only on the supposition, that the creatures to whom God reveals himself, have themselves eternally existed. Thus we have the Pantheistic doctrine of an eternal creation, which makes God and the creation one. We know not that Dr. Bushnell is prepared to take these consequences of his doctrines. Yet the following passages from his first book, '*God in Christ*,' look strongly that way. 'Conceive of him (God) as creating the world, or creating worlds, if you please, *from eternity*. In so doing he only represents, *produces, or outwardly expresses himself*,' p. 146. Also, p. 177, 'If God has been *eternally revealed or revealing himself to created minds*, it is likely always to have been, and always to be, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' This may satisfy Pantheists. To all others, it looks worse than the Sabellianism it is offered to screen."

2. They in no manner invalidate the second of the foregoing charges, in regard to Dr. Bushnell's denials respecting Christ's human soul.

3. With a single, and, as we shall show, perfectly immaterial exception, they do not deny that he teaches the horrid sentiments ascribed to him in the third specification relative to the Atonement. That exception is this. The complainants charge, that they understand him to teach that *the* "whole scheme of suffering in Christ, substituted directly for penal suffering in us, is a bare assumption," &c. The Hartford Central say, instead of "*the* whole scheme," Dr. Bushnell said "*this* whole scheme," &c. They then try to divert attention from the real issue, by expatiating upon this as a painful instance of injurious misquotation. It will be observed, that the word "the," in reference to which this accusation is made, is not put by the complainants within their quotation marks; the whole charge of Hartford Central, therefore, is baseless. Moreover, whether true or false, nothing material depends upon it. Whether he says "*the*" or "*this* whole scheme," &c. the word "whole" makes it manifestly include *all forms of the scheme of doctrine, according to which Christ's sufferings are "substituted directly for penal suffering in us."* They allege that Dr. Bushnell's language in the sentence preceding the

passage in question, (Christ in Theology, p. 234) shows that he was speaking only of "penal" suffering in Christ. The sentence referred to, *as quoted by them, indeed*, adverts to the sufferings of Christ being viewed as a "penal substitute" for ours. But in looking into the book itself, we find that the words are not "penal substitute," but "direct substitute." They themselves have put the word "penal" for the word "direct." Thus they falsely charged the complainants with making a misquotation, which, if they had made it, was both accidental and immaterial. And in order to give it any show of importance, they misquote the hinge-word of a preceding sentence, which, as it stands in the book, fully sustains the charge of the complainants.

And all the writings of Dr. Bushnell on the subject, fairly interpreted, fully sustain it, the Hartford Central themselves being judges. Expunge this part of the third specification, and the previous part remains intact, which they have not even attempted to call in question. It is as follows:

"That if God could accept the sufferings of the just for the unjust, it would indicate in him the loss or confusion of all moral distinctions."

To preclude all doubt or cavil, we here put in full the original language of Dr. Bushnell, thus condensed. (Christ in Theology, p. 272.)

"The *willingness* of God to accept the woes of innocence instead of the woes of guilt, would only indicate the confusion or loss of all moral distinctions, a readiness to let justice perish by a double sacrifice, first by releasing the pains of guilt, and again by receiving the pains of holiness."

How could language more explicitly assert the impossibility of the *direct substitution, in any form*, of Christ's sufferings for the punishment of the guilty?

Not only so, but the Hartford Central say,

"Yet he (Dr. Bushnell) denies that the sufferings were 'penal' (p. 273) and also that they are to be regarded as a laying on upon Christ of the direct abhorrence of God for sin."

They thus admit that he rejects both of the received forms, and the only possible forms, of the doctrine of vicarious atone-

ment, "strict" and "mitigated," whether called by the name of New England or Old-school. As to their plea that Dr. Bushnell holds that Christ by his death *indirectly* expresses the abhorrence of God to sin, does not every martyr do as much, and could any Unitarian say less?

They further quote Dr. Bushnell as saying,

"It is often alleged as a fatal heresy that I reject the opinion that 'Christ suffered evil in direct substitution for evil or penal suffering that was due from us.' Doubtless this may well enough be taken for heresy by those who believe that Christ was literally punished for our sins, or suffered penalty on account of them. But this is a doctrine openly discarded by most of the teachers of New England."

That he here denies without qualification that Christ's sufferings were in any form directly substituted for the punishment of sinners, is indisputable. But he also herein claims agreement with many New England theologians, on the alleged ground, that they denied that Christ's sufferings were "penal." As it is just here that the tactics of Dr. Bushnell, and the Hartford Central and their defenders, have been successful in misleading ministers and Christians, we shall dwell upon the matter long enough to clear up the truth on the subject, and show the true attitude of the parties thus implicated.

1. The so called New England theologians have never questioned, they have ever held as a principle confessedly not to be controverted, and fundamental among the orthodox, that Christ suffered evil in "direct substitution" for the punishment due to sinners. They have also held that his sufferings were thus "directly" laid upon him as the substitute of sinners, in vindication of God's law, as an expression of his justice or regard for righteousness, and of his abhorrence of sin; and that whoever denies that they are, to this extent, strictly vicarious, denies the faith. The point wherein some of them have differed from the old standards, has been, not in denying that his sufferings were of this character, but that, being confessedly such, they could properly be called "penal" or a "punishment." As the venerable names of Dwight and Griffin have been cited by Dr. Bushnell and the Hartford Central, in support of his rejection of this fundamental Christian truth, we cite a single

passage from each on this point. Dr. Dwight says, (Theol. vol. II. p. 393,) after quoting several texts of Scripture:

“Language cannot more clearly or more strongly assert that Christ was a SUBSTITUTE for sinners, that he bore their sins and SUFFERED FOR THEIR INIQUITIES; or, in other words, that he became an atonement for them.”

Says Dr. Griffin, (Atonement, p. 49,)

“I will now show you from the Scriptures, that the thing which was offered *for sin*, and which *came in the room of punishment*, and which *laid the foundation for pardon*, was no other than SUFFERING. It was this which was offered *for sin*. ‘Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.’” The italics are Dr. Griffin’s.

We hesitate not to pronounce the attempt to represent these men and their associates, as patrons or abettors of the doctrine that Christ’s sufferings were not directly substituted for the punishment of the sinner, a libel on the illustrious dead, and a fraud on the living. They would have sealed the doctrine they are thus charged with gainsaying, with their blood.

It is wholly immaterial to the present issue, whether they were right or wrong in denying that these vicarious sufferings of Christ could properly be called “penal.” The one truth which they held fast as beyond all debate among evangelical men was, that these sufferings were vicarious. That which they held to be an open question alone, was whether they were literally penal. But had the issue been this, that they must acknowledge that Christ’s sufferings were penal, because they were truly vicarious, or that they were not vicarious because not penal, they would have held fast the former view even unto death.

Now Dr. Bushnell, and, as we shall soon see, his defenders in Hartford Central, not only repudiate the penal view of Christ’s sufferings as absurd; but they also affirm, that the so called more mitigated view of the New England divines alluded to, which represents Christ’s sufferings as laid upon him “directly” in place of the sinner’s punishment, “to express God’s abhorrence of sin,” is one form or branch of the penal scheme, and as such to be rejected as absurd.

Thus, in our view, they discard every possible form of the doctrine of vicarious atonement.

We adduce the following facts to prove this grave allegation.

1. So far as Dr. Bushnell himself is concerned, the last quotation we have made from him (first adduced by the Hartford Central to prove his soundness) shows it. It is unmeaning on any other supposition, as will be perfectly clear to those who will look back and examine it.

2. That he rejects, and considers himself as rejecting, all forms, high and low, of vicarious atonement, held by the orthodox, on the ground that they are penal, will appear conclusively from the following extracts from his book, *God in Christ*.

“It will probably be right, then, to distribute the views of those, who are now accepted as orthodox teachers, into two classes; one, who consider the death of Christ as availing by force of what it *is*; the other, by force of what it *expresses*: the former holding it as a literal substitution of evil endured for evil that was to be endured; the latter holding it as an expression of abhorrence to sin, made through the suffering of one, in place of the same expression that was to be made, by the suffering of many.” p. 195.

“The objections I have to that more mitigated theory, are these:—First, it assumes that, *as punishment expresses the abhorrence of God to sin, or what is the same, his justice, he can sustain his law and lay a ground of forgiveness without punishment, only by some equivalent expression of abhorrence*—an assumption that is groundless and without consideration, as I may cause to appear in another place.

“Secondly, this latter seems to accord with the former view in supposing that Christ *suffers evil as evil*, or as a PENAL *visitation of God's justice*, only doing it in a less painful degree; that is, suffering *so much of evil as will suffice*, considering the dignity of his person, to express *the same amount of abhorrence to sin*, that would be expressed by the eternal punishment of all mankind. I confess my inability to see how an innocent being could ever be set, even for one moment, in an attitude of displeasure under God. *If he could lay his frown for one moment on the soul of innocence and virtue, he must be no such being as I have loved and worshipped. Much less can I ima-*



gine that he should lay it on the head of one whose nature is itself co-equal Deity. Does any one say that he will do it for public governmental reasons? No governmental reasons, I answer, can justify even the admission of innocence into a participation of frowns and penal distributions. If consenting innocence says:—‘Let the blow fall on me,’ precisely there is it for a government to prove its justice, even to the point of sublimity: to reveal the essential, eternal, unmitigable distinction it holds between innocence and sin, by declaring that under law and its distributions, it is even IMPOSSIBLE TO SUFFER ANY COMMUTATION, any the least confusion of places.” pp. 198—9.

It follows, of course, that the Hartford Central deems and treats every form of the doctrine of vicarious atonement, which, according to Dr. Bushnell, and in fact, is recognized among the orthodox, as, at least, non-essential. But we are sorry to be obliged to say more.

As the Hartford Central had published their Memorial in the Religious Herald, a paper edited by one of their leading members, some of the complainants published a brief rejoinder in the same journal, which dwelt more especially upon the questions connected with the doctrine of atonement.

In this article, they observed that three schemes were contemplated by Dr. Bushnell in his books.

“1. The PENAL SCHEME; *i. e.* (as explained by Hartford Central) ‘the scheme of penal suffering’—suffering ‘merely as suffering,’ ‘APART from the consideration of *expression* and *design in relation to the ends of moral government.*’

“2. The GOVERNMENTAL SCHEME: in which suffering is laid directly upon Christ—‘evil to pay the release of evil’—as a sacrifice, a propitiation by *direct vicarious sufferings*, to EXPRESS God’s justice, or his abhorrence of sin.

“3. The AT-ONE-MENT SCHEME: which represents the sufferings of Christ as merely incidental, not laid upon him, nor inflicted on him in order that he may suffer ‘evil as evil’ for our release; but only the sufferings that he *incidentally* meets with from human malice, while on an errand of entirely another character.

“The first of these schemes, as stated by the Hartford Central, is a caricature of what they term the ‘Views of the

Princeton Theologians,' and of the doctrine of the atonement set forth in our own Westminster Confession and Catechism.

"The second or Governmental scheme, is commonly styled the New England theory.

"The third is the theory of Socinians and of modern Universalists. It denies what is fundamental in the other two, viz., the *direct vicariousness* of the sufferings of Christ. It denies all vicarious sufferings, every thing properly involved in the idea of a propitiatory sacrifice. With Dr. Bushnell, it holds that the work of Christ was not to propitiate God, but man: and hence it has been styled 'At-one-ment,' in distinction from any and every proper doctrine of atonement."

After showing by extracts from Dr. Bushnell's books, that he rejects the first two, and adopts the third, the complainants ask,

"And now how stands the Hartford Central? They say 'We have no hesitation in saying that the sufferings and death of Christ were *vicarious*.' But to the word 'vicarious' they append an explanation; '*vicarious in the sense of*' &c. And in setting forth the sense which they assign to the word vicarious, they wholly omit to say whether Christ suffered directly in our stead, even to *express* the divine justice or abhorrence of sin, and so by his sufferings directly *substituted* for penal sufferings in us, to redeem us from the curse of the law—'Being made a curse for us;' or whether his sufferings were merely incidental, with no other design than of propitiating man.

"The explanation which Hartford Central appends to the word 'vicarious' in this connection, leaves it impossible to determine by the explanation itself whether they mean to adopt the evangelical atonement, or the at-one-ment of Dr. Bushnell and the Socinians. So far as their explanation goes, and on its own evidence simply, it is a paltering in a double sense between the two. Is this paltering designed? Did they mean, by annexing this explanation to the otherwise well understood word 'vicarious' to give it such a latitude as to embrace the heretical at-one-ment, as well as the evangelical atonement. Let them explain themselves. This is the more demanded, because in one of their answers to Fairfield West, they say that they came to their decision concerning Dr. Bush-

nell by 'analyzing the doctrines in question, *reducing them to their last elements*, throwing out what may be termed merely incidental, or at least not *essential*.' The results of that analysis they gave us before. Here we have the process. Whatever they may hold as their own theology, in their judgment concerning Dr. Bushnell, they throw away the sufferings of Christ in direct substitution for penal sufferings in us, even as an *expression* of God's justice, or of his abhorrence of sin. They retain the Socinian at-one-ment, as the only '*last element*' in the sacrifice and death of our Lord! So, by the late judgment and its recent vindication, so stands the rule of faith in Hartford Central. Is it now to be the rule of faith established among our ministers and churches, or does this judgment belie the New England faith, and subvert the doctrinal basis of our union?"

The \* Editor of the paper, and reputed author of the Memorial of Hartford Central, and with Dr. Porter the most prominent of its chosen defenders in General Association, makes a reply in the same number of his paper, to this Rejoinder, which sufficiently answers these questions, so far as he is concerned, and, as we think, under the circumstances, for his Association, till they disavow such doctrine. He says:

"We consider the two first theories, as stated by them, to be nearly or quite identical, both being referable to the *legal* or *penal* scheme, of which they are but subdivisions, and to both of which the true New England view is opposed."

He then goes on and denounces the "legal or penal scheme" as a "*scheme of absurdity worthy of a mechanical theology*."

And what is the doctrine thus denounced in such terms of derision and scorn? Not merely the doctrine that Christ was punished for the sins of men, but also the "governmental scheme; in which suffering is laid directly upon Christ; evil to pay the release of evil—as a sacrifice, a propitiation by *direct vicarious sufferings* to EXPRESS God's justice, or his abhorrence of sin!" Thus most clearly every vestige of the doctrine of vicarious atonement is cast away as an absurdity! With what truth and fairness the "New England view" is impressed into the service of such men we have already seen. Let it be remembered, too, that their own General Association has pro-

nounced the doctrine that Christ "offered up himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice," fundamental, and the denial of it heresy. And we feel compelled to add, that by whomsoever such heresies are avowed and persisted in, we can have no fellowship with them, be they Dr. Bushnell, the star Editor, the Hartford Central, New England, or even an apostle or angel from heaven. It is surely needless to labour the proof that Dr. Bushnell teaches this deadly heresy, or that his Association shield it, when their leading members, in a journal devoted to their cause, unblushingly avow, and defend, and propagate it. We have dwelt the longer on this point, because it involves the most vital and fundamental truth of the gospel.

The Memorial of Hartford Central complains of the fourth charge of complainants, as imputing to Dr. Bushnell a want of sincerity, but does not undertake to show it untrue. It is proved most undeniably in the documents of Fairfield West. They say, "we cannot speak of the sun's rising without being liable to the same kind of impeachment." A clear admission, as it seems to us, that Dr. Bushnell teaches that the form in which the Bible sets forth Christ, and calls on men to believe upon him, is, in fact, false and absurd.

With regard to the fifth charge, they say that Dr. Bushnell was speaking not of our "accepted systems of religious doctrine," but of our "treatises of theology." And do not these contain our "accepted systems of religious doctrine?"\*

These charges, therefore, are in no manner invalidated by

\* They commend the following as a "very serious and proper suggestion."

"*Christ in Theology.*" (p. 70.) "And it will be found, as a matter of fact, that all the strong bodies of Protestant believers—the Lutheran, the Reformed Church, the Scotch, the Methodist, and, in fact, the Independent connection—have been organized in and by the strong ligaments of formulas, taken as being the very essence and literal being of the truth. In their formulas, these bodies or churches have all their distinct characteristics, and, as it would almost seem, a vital force equally distinctive and peculiar to themselves. They seem, in fact, to be different organizations, and many will even praise the stern, uncomplying rigour of their doctrine, for the very reason that it is seen to have an organizing power so efficiently and broadly characteristic.

"Now if there be something agreeable in this, which I will not deny, it does not seem to me to be any thing that is properly Christian. On the contrary, though we love to see organic vigour and lively characteristics, it is not pleasant to see Christian bodies animated by distinct varieties of life. Such appearances awaken the painful suspicion that *what we call our Christianity, is a product only of the organizing force of human dogmatism.*"

the Memorial of Hartford Central, but are rather (especially the worst of them) confirmed by it, and aggravated by the developments since made. These show that one, at least, of the leading members in that body—even one who voted in the General Association, that he could have no fellowship with the opinions imputed by the complainants to Dr. Bushnell—not only countenances but adopts the worst of his heresies.

What action was taken by the General Association on this showing of facts? After a hurried discussion of a little over half a day, at about 10 o'clock, P. M., they passed the following minute unanimously:

“That the opinions imputed to Dr. Bushnell by the complainants, and the imputation of which is no doubt warranted, if the construction which they conscientiously give to certain quotations from his published books is just, are opinions with which the ministers and churches of Connecticut as represented in this General Association have no fellowship, and the profession of which on the part of candidates for the ministry, ought to prevent their receiving license or approbation of any of our Associations; and further, that when a minister is reasonably chargeable with holding those opinions, definite charges and specifications should be preferred against him before the proper body, which body should make arrangements to secure for the charges an impartial hearing and decision.”

“Rev. Dr. Hall said, that on reflection he was not satisfied with this resolution. Though good as far as it went, it was insufficient without something more. He thought the General Association ought to advise the Hartford Central that they should bring Dr. Bushnell to trial. Accordingly he offered the following resolutions:

“*Resolved*, That the matters alleged both by the Fairfield West Association and by the complainants, Rev. G. A. Calhoun, D. D., and others, are of so grave a nature as to demand judicial investigation, and that those who make these allegations are so numerous, so earnest, and, in our opinion, so intelligent and conscientious, as to render such matters of complaint duly presented by them, or any of them, reasonable ground for such investigation. Therefore

“*Resolved*, That this body advise the Hartford Central As-

sociation, that if such a complaint be presented in due order and form, they cannot refuse or neglect to secure a just trial of Dr. Bushnell before an impartial mutual council, with the approbation of the associated ministers of the State."

"On motion of Rev. Dr. Bacon, it was voted to lay this resolution upon the table; whereupon Dr. Hall presented the following protest:

"Against the decision of the General Association, in laying upon the table, and so refusing to consider the foregoing resolutions, designed to secure an impartial trial of Dr. Bushnell in case any shall duly present charges, the undersigned respectfully and solemnly *protest*—because, though the action already passed is good so far as it goes, and they voted for it, it does not go far enough to redress the evil complained of. It declares the matters alleged, if alleged justly, a sufficient ground for demanding trial and condemnation. Now Dr. Bushnell and his church have withdrawn from the Council of Hartford North, for the purpose of avoiding the trial advised by the General Association at Danbury; and the Hartford Central Association have already declared, and persisted in declaring, that to subject Dr. Bushnell to the charge of heresy for the matters alleged, is not merely unreasonable, but unjust. How much soever any may desire it, a trial under the circumstances is impossible. The General Association, by refusing to advise the Hartford Central, that on due charges being made, they cannot refuse to secure a just trial before an impartial mutual council, with the approbation of the associated ministry of this State, have refused the suitable and necessary redress to the complainants, and, in so doing, have refused to vindicate and maintain the standards of doctrine upon which our union and fellowship are based. They still retain and admit to all the fellowship, privileges, and immunities of our confederation, and that without securing the opportunity for an impartial trial, one who is fully and unequivocally charged with having denied the great fundamental doctrines of Christ, and with having set forth a scheme which the Fairfield West Association and others, have solemnly—publicly declared to be another gospel.

EDWIN HALL,

LYMAN H. ATWATER.

*Waterbury, June 24th, 1853."*

“The following answer to the above protest was presented and adopted:

“In admitting the protest of Drs. Hall and Atwater to a place in the minutes of this Association, we deem a denial of the reasonings and conclusions of that protest a sufficient answer; in particular, we deny,

“1. That there is any necessity for any further action on the part of this General Association, by way of advice, to secure a hearing in the proper quarter for such charges as may be preferred by responsible complainants against any man in our fellowship. We also deny,

“2. That it would be proper for this General Association to decide beforehand that certain charges against a member of a particular Association shall be tried, and in that way to encroach upon the power and liberty of a particular Association.”

On a careful review of all the facts thus far presented, the following seems to be a true exposition of the present attitude of the case.

1. The Memorial of Hartford Central, the only defence of themselves or Dr. Bushnell's books which has yet appeared, so far from showing that “the opinions imputed to Dr. Bushnell by the complainants” are not avowed by him, furnishes additional evidence that, as to all material points, they are the real opinions undeniably taught in his books, and never yet retracted by him. At all events, the proofs of the truth of these charges, collated by Fairfield West, and laid before the General Association by that body, and by the complainants, which have so generally satisfied the Christian people of this country on this subject, have not been rebutted. No attempt has been made fairly to rebut any important part of them, nor, in our opinion, can they be rebutted.

2. The General Association being judge, such opinions ought to debar from the ministry and from Christian fellowship those who hold them. When the charge of holding them is reasonably, (*i. e.* with a strong appearance of probability,) brought against any minister, he ought to be put on trial for his standing in the ministry.

3. Yet, although charges of holding such opinions have been so widely and earnestly made against Dr. Bushnell, supported,

too, by such an amount of unanswered and unanswerable evidence, the Hartford Central Association persist in saying that he is sound in the faith, and cannot justly be subject to the charge of heresy and a consequent trial—and this, after an amount of labour to induce them to retreat from this position, seldom if ever paralleled, or likely, in future, to be paralleled in any similar case.

4. To evade the trial advised by the General Association at Danbury, Dr. Bushnell with his church withdrew from the jurisdiction of Consociation. Dr. Bushnell and the Hartford Central Association retain their standing, privileges, and immunities in the General Association entire and intact. Without further action, either dealing with, or advising the Hartford Central, the General Association suffers its own former advice to be defeated. Ministers that avow, and Associations that protect the heresies alleged, are suffered to remain in the General Association without censure, without expostulation, without a trial.

5. The General Association, having refused in any manner to call to account the Hartford Central, was then moved to advise that body, that if charges should be properly preferred before it against Dr. Bushnell, it could not properly refuse to secure a trial before an impartial tribunal. But it refused this only remaining measure of redress, having any tendency to exclude the heresies complained of from its connection. It has refused the slightest redress of which the case admits. It denies that such "further action" is either "necessary" or "proper." But without such action, manifestly, no fair trial is possible. They thus deny that it is "necessary" or "proper" for them to secure a trial of, or provide any other remedy for, the case of a member who has been repeatedly charged before them, by the Fairfield West Association, and again by fifty-two ministers, with teaching opinions which they themselves say, if justly charged, ought to exclude from the ministry. They refuse to touch one of their Associations, which persists in saying that the charge against one of their members of holding such opinions, thus extensively, persistently, and responsibly made, and supported by such overwhelming *prima facie* evidence, furnishes no just ground for a trial: nay, that



one who has in manifold forms avowed the identical opinions which the General Association says ought to debar from the ministry, "cannot justly be subjected to the charge of heresy and a consequent trial, or be denied the confidence of his brethren in the ministry."

6. It is thus virtually decided that the General Association cannot properly take any measures to purge itself from any heresy, when avowed by any minister in its connection, and shielded by his Association. It can scarcely be conceived that any minister expecting to remain in the Congregational communion, should avow opinions more grossly heretical, or in forms more palpable, manifold, unambiguous, than Dr. Bushnell has done. No case can be conceived in which a larger number of ministers would combine and persevere, with a greater amount of labour and sacrifice, to secure the removal of such heresy from their fellowship. The disposal of this case therefore, in our opinion settles it, that it is impracticable to remove heresy from the General Association of Connecticut, as that body is now constituted, when once it is sheltered or espoused by a district Association. Whether this results from the nature of Congregationalism, or the unfaithfulness of those who administer it, in this case, is of no importance, so far as the great fact is concerned. The practical issue has come, which the complainants insisted would come, if "suitable redress" of their grievances were denied. "Membership and certificates of membership in this body are not even *prima facie* evidence of soundness in the faith;" they are no evidence that those who have them do not hold the heresies of Dr. Bushnell; or of his brother of the Religious Herald, who scouts the doctrine of vicarious atonement, held by evangelical Christians, as a "SCHEME OF ABSURDITY WORTHY OF A MECHANICAL THEOLOGY." This is undeniable. For it now has such members, and refuses to take any steps for reforming or excluding them. And has not the further alternative, set forth by the complainants therefore come, in which "its delegations to other Christian bodies become an imposture, and its bond of union a nullity?" So it seems to us. Foreign bodies who exchange delegates with the General Association of Connecticut, are plainly liable to receive those

to their fellowship who repudiate the first principles of Christian doctrine as set forth in their Confessions of Faith. Their "bond of union" too, by including those who deny and subvert the doctrinal basis of that union, is utterly broken, or made a rope of sand.

In such a state of things those who love the truth as it is in Jesus, will of course take no vague or indecisive position. Fidelity to the Head of the Church, to the truth of the gospel, to the souls committed to their care, to the ministers and people connected with them, to other Christian bodies in correspondence with them, to the whole Christian world, and to posterity, require that they utter no uncertain sound, and take a position which shall be known and read of all men. This seems the more requisite, as the worst of the heresies charged, begins to be avowed and propagated with increasing boldness since this final disposal of the subject by the General Association.

What it becomes them to do in this emergency is not for us to say. We understand that many among them begin to feel that they can scarcely do less than signify to the world, that whatever relations they may continue to sustain to the existing ecclesiastical bodies of the State, they can be in no manner sponsors for the orthodoxy of those bodies, or of their members, or for the validity of their certificates, or other ecclesiastical acts. For such membership and certificates are no evidence that they who possess them do not hold and teach the heresies we have been considering, or what has loudly and justly been denounced by the evangelical world as "another gospel."

But how are we to explain the connivance and protection thus given to such sentiments by the major part of the Connecticut ministry? The ready answer to this with many will be, that so far from conniving at or protecting, they have by repeated declarations, first at Litchfield, and then at Waterbury, repudiated and condemned these sentiments, and disavowed all fellowship with them. Such declarations are indeed well, as far as they go. But they are of little account, so long as those who boldly avow the heresies so condemned, are retained in fellowship, and every measure is obstinately refused, *which can have any tendency to exclude such heresies from the General Association, or to bring their authors under Christian discip-*

*line.* There is no answering Fairfield West, when they say, (Appeal, p. 91.)

“In such circumstances, if the General Association does nothing more than declare that the ministers and churches regard the denial of these doctrines as heresy, if it does not go forward and take effectual measures for removing such heresy from its connection, all such declarations are proved to be false and insincere. They are masks, which if they hide our shame from ourselves, do but attract the attention of others to it.”

1. There are those who, as we have already seen, are represented in the only weekly religious journal of the denomination in the State by the chosen champion of Dr. Bushnell and his Association, and who tread so far in the footsteps of their master as to stigmatize the doctrine of vicarious atonement, in every form of it recognized in the Christian church, as “A SCHEME OF ABSURDITY WORTHY OF A MECHANICAL THEOLOGY.” We shall wait for evidence before we can believe that this class extends beyond the precincts of Hartford Central.

2. A larger class have been imposed upon by the disingenuous tactics of Dr. Bushnell and his apologists. They have been made to believe that Dr. Bushnell opposed only the “penal” scheme of atonement, while he substantially embraced what has been called the New England scheme. The grossness of this pretence we have already exposed.

3. In aid of this delusion has come the weak and confused position of those, who, holding that Christ’s sufferings are strictly vicarious, nevertheless deny that they are truly penal in their nature. So far as they are truly vicarious, they are laid on Christ for the sins of men, in satisfaction of justice and in vindication of law. What is this but punishment? So Christ bore our sins. How, unless in bearing their penalty? We have always resisted those who deny that Christ’s sufferings are penal, because we not only believe that herein they deny precious truth, but because we also believe that they thus put a sword into the hands of the opposers of vicarious atonement, and disarm its friends. While these good brethren cling to the vicarious, but deny the penal quality of Christ’s sufferings, they are embarrassed, as these artful dodgers skulk under their own theories for a shelter: and ask them, “if you deny that Christ’s

death was penal, and assert that it was symbolical or demonstrative merely, what if we affirm also that it was simply didactic or expressive only in another way?" Of course the same reasoning, if good for any thing, is good for the rankest Socinianism. The star Editor is abundant in insisting that New-school men would see that they could not consistently oppose Dr. Bushnell, if they had run out their own theories to their legitimate results. It is not incumbent on us to show that this claim is unjust. But we will say,

1. That the bold urging of it has apparently unmanned many New-school men on this subject, and paralyzed their opposition to Dr. Bushnell's heresies on the Atonement.

2. It is altogether unfair to assume, as Dr. Bushnell and his defenders have done, that these men admit the logical consequences of their denial that Christ's sufferings were penal, or waver at all in the faith that these sufferings are directly substituted for the sinner's punishment, and that this doctrine is fundamental.

3. This controversy has afforded a new and conclusive proof, that we gain nothing and hazard everything, by tampering with the old doctrine of the Scriptures and the Church, *that Christ's sufferings were truly penal and so truly vicarious.*

4. We imagine that uncertainty of mind as to jurisdiction had much to do with the result. This jurisdiction was sturdily denied by the Hartford Central Association to the last. No similar case had ever been known among Congregationalists. It was admitted too, on all hands, that the General Association was not a judicial body, and yet that it had control over its own membership. Still the feeling among many was, that the General Association could not look into the judicial acts of district Associations, for the purpose of calling them to account, and thus indirectly reversing proceedings which they could not directly overrule. The development of opinion in the body on this subject is somewhat remarkable. Dr. Bacon offered the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That inasmuch as the General Association is not a judicial body for the trial of appeals from subordinate judicatories, whether Churches, Councils, or Associations, the decision of a particular Association in regard to the standing of

one of its members is not to be examined by the General Association, with a view to its being confirmed, or reversed.

“2. *Resolved*, That to arraign a particular Association for trial before the General Association, simply on the charge that it has made an erroneous decision in a single case concerning the character and standing of one of its members, especially when it professes its cordial and undiminished attachment to the system of Christian doctrine, which is the bond of our union, would be to do indirectly what the General Association has no right to do directly; and would be to usurp the power and jurisdiction belonging to a court of appeal.”

The following resolutions adopted by the General Association in 1848, without any intimation from any quarter that the body was therein usurping judicial powers, were then read by a member.

“*Whereas*, this association is in the dark respecting the *discipline* exercised by certain ecclesiastical bodies in correspondence with us, in regard to the sin of slavery, therefore,

“*Resolved*, that a committee of three be appointed by this body, to collect facts and make inquiries respecting this subject, and report to the next General Association.

“Rev. Dr. Bacon, &c., were appointed a committee, &c.”

No sooner was this read, than the second of the above proposed resolutions was modified with the assent of the mover, by the following addendum: “Unless the case be of such a nature that said judgment and decision indicates a fatal disregard of our faith and order.”

It was somewhat too glaring to have had no misgivings about the warrant to inspect the discipline of distant Presbyteries remotely connected with the body, and to become all at once morbidly scrupulous about the right to look into a case of discipline in which it was solemnly alleged that one of their own associations had subverted the fundamentals of the gospel! Still we doubt not that a certain haziness of view on this subject concurred with a similar indeterminateness of mind on the doctrinal matters involved, to bring about the final indecisive result. As many viewed it, who had not thoroughly examined the subject, it was possible after all, that Dr. Bushnell might have been misunderstood. And it was possible that the offence

of the Hartford Central was not grave enough to subject it justly to the charge of a "fatal disregard of our faith or order." Of course all such were prepared to do nothing but to give the accused the benefit of their doubts.

But we should fail to detect the deepest ground of the sympathy or favour felt towards Dr. Bushnell's books by some of the younger clergy, if we did not advert to the state of mind in which a great part of those educated in the system called New Divinity find themselves, after being a few years in actual pastoral service. They soon feel it to be a dry, lifeless, starveling system; and that they must find something broader and richer to satisfy their longing souls. Many of them are directed to the standard, catholic, and Calvinistic authors, and above all, to their Bibles. They find themselves thus refreshed and invigorated with the truth as it is in Jesus, "ever new and ever young," and which the metaphysical figments that had famished their souls, had so long supplanted. Many such are even among the champions of old Calvinism.

But another class, in this unsettled state of mind, fall in with Schleiermacher, or Morell, or Dr. Bushnell. Here, too, they find large pretensions to spiritual light, inspiration, the life of God in the soul, which not only quite eclipse the dead metaphysics they have learned to mistake for orthodoxy, but the standard of Paul and John, Augustin, Luther, Calvin, Edwards, the saints of all generations. Not a few who are, as we verily believe, in search of the true light, are unhappily dazzled just now, by these glaring, stained lights, that happened to fall upon their track. We believe that many of these, if they can be shown, or can find the truth, will embrace it. When such a man as Dr. Bacon speaks in the terms following, as he did in the Bushnell debate at Waterbury, he certainly indicates a state of theological training, or opinion among the clergy antecedent to the late discussions, which, if not reformed into something better, must quickly ripen into something worse. It goes far to account for all the phenomena under review. We quote without note or comment.

"Let me say further—for I am now defining my position—that I think I can see the wisdom of God in permitting that book (*God in Christ*) to be published. Much as there is in it

at variance with our feelings, it has had a good effect upon our theology—at least it has upon mine. It has led me to a re-examination of what we were holding in New England as the doctrine of the Trinity. I was astounded when I found what was held by some of our divines on this subject. I did hear *flat tritheism* in my own pulpit from one of the most venerable and honoured men in the ministry of this country—in a sermon aimed against the teachings of this very book. I found that in some of our theological seminaries the doctrine of the Trinity was propounded in a form truly heretical—that of ‘one substance with three sets of attributes.’ This theory is in face and eyes of the Athanasian creed. Not only myself, but others, I am persuaded, have been led to more definite views on this subject, in consequence of the publications of Dr. Bushnell, and of the discussions that have grown out of them. In former years I was in the habit of speaking somewhat unbelievably, to say the least, of the doctrine of eternal generation, as held by our benighted brethren of the Old-school Presbyterian Church. But I take all that back. I believe that doctrine as it is contained in the Nicene creed. I have been led to hold the doctrines of our faith more in accordance with the ancient formulas, by Dr. Bushnell’s books; and I have heard of other men who have been led by them to preach the doctrine of eternal generation. I suspect, indeed, that they have been of benefit to our theology, even in the most orthodox quarters of our ecclesiastical commonwealth. Dr. Bushnell’s book has been useful to me because of the force with which it impresses upon us all the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me—I do not know but I shall give offence in saying it—but it seems to me, that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit among us was becoming a very dry kind of doctrine—was regarded as almost an *incumbrance* in our system of faith; and it is my impression that as the result of these recent discussions, we have become more orthodox on this point. I am weary, and have been for a long time, of this metaphysical hair-splitting in theology; of this attempt to define the psychological relations of the Holy Spirit to the human mind. We have had an erroneous tradition, that the power of Edwards as a preacher lay in his peculiar notions of the philosophy of the will. It did not lie there;

it lay in the doctrine which, as I think, constituted the life and power of his book on the Affections—namely, that gracious affections are accompanied with new spiritual light.”

There is another important fact in this connection, which doubtless had great influence in preventing any decisive action in the premises. Those who had themselves been forward in introducing or promoting doctrinal innovations, and in obliterating whatever old landmarks and barriers would dyke out their novelties, however much they detested Dr. Bushnell's views, felt the awkwardness of assuming to be champions of orthodoxy—and especially of appearing intolerant or exclusive towards fresh innovators, to whom they could not deny with a good grace the same license which they had already claimed for themselves. For the most part, therefore, New-school men were abundant in decisive declarations, but unwilling to carry out those declarations in the exercise of corresponding discipline.

The last General Association of Connecticut signalized itself by an act of fundamental importance in its bearings upon the ecclesiastical constitution of the churches of the State. They admitted an Association formed avowedly upon the basis of elective affinity, instead of territorial contiguity. Against this procedure, driven through with little discussion under the screw of the previous question, Dr. Hewit protested, as revolutionary and subversive of the Saybrook Platform. To this it was rejoined by Dr. Bacon, that the Saybrook Platform had already become obsolete and been superseded in various particulars. This is very true. But it is also true that these particulars did not involve the fundamental principle of the Platform, but only the incidental details and arrangements for carrying it out. That principle was this: that ecclesiastical bodies should *be formed upon the basis of territorial contiguity, and not of the likes or dislikes of parties or individuals, setting at defiance that principle.* The great principle of the Platform is, that “churches which are neighbouring shall consociate.” The formation of bodies by elective affinity lays the axe at the root of this principle, and gives the Platform its death-blow. Compared with this, all prior infractions were of that minor sort,



which did not touch the vitals; and to which Dr. Hewit justly applies the maxim, *de minimis lex non curat*.

We will only add, that some constitution, platform, or manual, which shall be recognized by the Congregational body as a just representation of their principles, seems to us a desideratum. As to the Saybrook Platform, even the fragments of it which yet survive, are of no force out of Connecticut. The Cambridge Platform is largely obsolete. Each Congregationalist may adopt as much or as little of it as he pleases. None adopt it as a whole. There is no manual or treatise on the subject known to us, which does not contain much that would be extensively repudiated by the most respectable men of the denomination. If one wishes to know his rights, duties, and immunities, as a member or officer of a Congregational church, where is the constitution that shows them? Does one say, the Bible? All claim to abide by that. Is it usage? But this is diverse in different quarters. Besides, where is the authentic evidence what this usage is? We think the permanent unity and prosperity of the denomination will require some united declaration of its fundamental principles, to which all can be directed, when they wish to know, on authority, what Congregationalism is.

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ART. IV.—*History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Vol. Fifth. The Reformation in England.* By J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, D. D., &c., &c. New York: R. Carter & Brothers. 1853.

IN the preface to the *fourth* volume of this history, Dr. Merle states that it was his desire "to narrate also the beginnings of the English Reformation, but my volume is filled, and I am compelled to defer this subject to the next." After giving some reasons for the omission, he proceeds to say: "It is not without some portion of fear that I approach the History of the Reformation in England; it is perhaps more difficult than elsewhere. I have received communications from some of the most respectable men of the different ecclesiastical parties, who, each feeling convinced that their own point of view