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ARTICLE I.

THE MORALITY OF ACTIONS, VOLITIONS, DESIRES, EMOTIONS, COGNITIONS, AND DISPOSITIONS.

1. According to Paley, in his Natural Theology, the best way to introduce a large subject is to propose an individual case. We will suppose, then, that a man takes from another, by force or by stealth, some article of food, not in order to preserve his life or health, but merely to gratify his palate. This is certainly a case of wrong doing; and two questions arise, viz.: What is wrong, and why is it wrong? The ancient mode of statement sounds rather scholastic, but it has the merit of being very precise. We may inquire, what is the material cause of sin, and what is its formal cause? The material cause of the pen with which we are writing, is the steel of which it is composed; and the formal cause is the shape into which the steel has been fashioned, and which makes it a pen instead of an amorphous lump of metal. The present article will be devoted to the former inquiry, namely, What that is in which the quality of morality inheres?

2. It is hardly necessary to prove that sin is a quality, not a substance. Indeed, this does not seem to admit of proof; it is an intuitive conviction. The Gnostics and the Manichæans, according to Hodge—Theol., Vol. II., p. 132—held that it was a substance, an eternal *ὕλη*, or matter. The same writer quotes Augustine as saying that “Manes, following other ancient here-

tics, thought that there were two natures and substances, to wit, of good and of evil." Our own investigations have led us to the opinion that these early speculatists held matter to be the source of sin, a substance of which sin was a quality, or at least an invariable concomitant. Dr. Hodge states, also, that the point of difference between these heresies and the Parsee system, was that the former made the eternal principle impersonal, while the latter exalted it to the rank of a personal being. This view, however, does not appear to be borne out by Neander, nor by the authorities quoted by Giessler. Such is the difficulty of reaching any consistent theory of the wild notions in which the Gnostics and the Manichees indulged. One of the criteria of intuitive beliefs is their universality; and we apprehend that, notwithstanding the *apparent* exception of these early heretics, the suffrages of our race would declare right and wrong to be qualities and not substances.

3. All men would agree that the quality of morality may attach to actions. Some actions have no moral character; for instance, *some* acts of insane persons, though we have never seen a sufficiently guarded statement as to this phase of responsibility. Passing over this question of medical jurisprudence, we assert the truism, that according to the Scriptures, and according to the common judgment of mankind, many acts of free moral agents have a moral character. Actions are commanded; actions are forbidden; we shall be judged for the deeds done in the body.

Yet outward, bodily actions are not the primary seat of morality. The taking and eating of food that rightfully belongs to us, may differ in no particle, considered as an external act, from the taking and eating of food that is not justly ours. Human life may be taken in the phrenzy of insanity, in self-defence, in execution of the law, in the heat of passion, or in cold blood and with malice aforethought; and the verdict of the jury will vary from a pitying acquittal to the sternest condemnation. It is only in a secondary sense that outward actions have a moral character. God punishes evil intentions; and amid all the imperfections of human law, the intent of the agent is largely considered.

We must go from the body to the soul if we would find the proper seat of morality.

4. It is an old saying, that all virtue is voluntary ; and, like many other adages, there is much truth and no little error in it.

The ancient division of the mental faculties was into two departments, the understanding and the will. Different philosophers gave different names to these departments, according to their individual fancies ; but the two-fold division is at least as old as Aristotle. About the time of Kant, in the last century, the three-fold division into intellect, sensibilities, and will, came into vogue ; and on some accounts it is preferable to the older way. But what confusion has it not introduced into speculation ! Formerly, the will included desire, emotion, and affection, as well as choice and volition. Now, it is usually confined to the last two, if not to volition alone. If we do not sedulously keep in mind which of the two meanings of the word Will we are employing, we shall of course make blunders. No less a metaphysician than Jonathan Edwards, seems to have tripped a little from this cause.

The line of partition must be drawn somewhere, if the old domain of the will is to be divided into two parts. Let us put the emotions, desires, and affections under the head of the sensibilities ; and let the volitions and purposes remain under the will. The volitions are those mental acts which immediately precede bodily action ; and the purposes are those which remotely precede both volitions and outward actions. We do not intend to say that these are the only functions of our volitions and our purposes ; but merely to distinguish between the two, sufficiently for the present occasion.

It will be enough to consider whether our volitions have a moral character. Here, again, all men are agreed. Some go so far as to aver that nothing else does have such a character. We will consider their theory presently, but just now we are concerned with the statement and not the argument. It is essential to our statement to advert again to the distinction of primary and secondary, and to say that our volitions and our purposes, too, have only a secondary moral quality. As Alexander has well

shown, the volition may be precisely the same in various kinds of killing. We will to give a blow, to point a gun, to pull a trigger; and the volition is the same, whether we are acting in self-defence, or are executing the law, or are committing murder. Yet the volition in the last case, though not differing intrinsically from a similar volition in the two former cases, bears such a relation to God's law as to constitute it "*vere peccatum.*"

5. Penetrating still farther into the arcana of our nature, we inquire into the cause of our volitions. Our limits forbid us to consider at length the particularly absurd and preposterous notion of the self-determining power of the will. If its supporters mean that the will, the faculty of volition, is under the control of the sensibilities, which sensibilities also were anciently classed under the will; if they mean that one part of the will, in this broad sense, rules over another part, they have a singularly unfortunate way of expressing themselves. But if they mean that the will, in the modern and narrower sense, determines itself, they destroy man's responsibility, and make him intellectually inferior to the beasts that perish. Brutes have a reason for their procedures, even if it be in some cases only the gratification of a blind but useful instinct. But man, under the impulse of this imaginary and disastrous power, would act without any reason whatever.

6. Our volitions are determined by our desires. Hence, we enter the province of the sensibilities: A two-fold division awaits us here. Our desires are fulfilled in action; their direct tendency is to action. If they do not lead to action, it is because they are in some way hindered. A weaker desire is overpowered by a stronger conflicting desire, as a thirst for fame or wealth overcomes a natural love of ease. Again, we may desire things which we have no hope of obtaining, and which we therefore make no effort to obtain. The twig of desire does not bud into volition, or bloom into action. It is otherwise with our emotions. Desire has an outward, emotion an inward look. Desire is objective; emotion subjective. We desire something without, for the sake of the emotion within. The man in our illustration desired the food for the sake of the sensation of

the palate. Desires and emotions, then, divide between them the domain of the sensibilities. We might add a third class of affections, but they are only compounds of desires and emotions; or a fourth class of passions, but they are affections of a vehement type; or a fifth class of appetites, in which the emotions are of the physical kind, called sensations; but this distinction, although founded on a difference, is irrelevant to the issue in hand.

7. The next question, then, is, whether our desires have a moral character? To which we make answer that some have, and some have not. A desire for revenge must be wrong, and a desire to please God must be right; while a desire for ease, for worldly fame, or for riches, would not be considered as in themselves either right or wrong.

To resume our initial example: A desire for food to gratify the palate has in itself no moral quality; and it makes no difference how strong that desire may be. Intensify it a thousand-fold, and it still fails of possessing that peculiar characteristic, just as a block of wood is not metallic; and if blocks of wood be piled up mountain high, they will never become a metal of any kind. So, again, hunger of the most famishing, frantic sort, is not sinful.

In the man, then, who fraudulently took the food, the sin was in the want of due regard for his neighbor's rights, and for the authority of God. This brings us back to the Augustinian theory of sin's being a defect; a theory which that illustrious father adopted as against the Manichean heresy, but which does not cover the whole ground. A desire to please and glorify God, however, has an intrinsic moral quality. It is one of the elements of that love which is required by the first and great commandment. So, also, a desire to rid ourselves of indwelling sin is virtuous, and meets with the approbation of the Holy One.

8. But we have not yet gotten to the bottom of the matter, and never shall do so until we reach the emotions, which are the fountains of our desires. Desire is not ultimate; it is for the sake of something else. Eradicate emotion from our nature, and you eradicate desire along with it. Desire, volition, action, all originate in emotion; that is, either in a positive emotion, or in the

removal of some feeling which is objectionable to us. For instance, the food pleases the palate, or at least assuages the pangs of hunger. Emotion, then, is the very core of our being, and in it, above all else, we find the primary and original seat of morality, so far as the exercises of the soul are concerned. Emotion, desire, volition, and action are the links of the golden chain which binds us to heaven, or the iron one that drags us to hell. The first determines the second, the second controls the third, the third manifests itself in the fourth.

What we have said respecting the desires, we repeat in regard to the emotions, that some of them are right, some are wrong, and some have no moral quality. There is no sin in any enjoyment of the sense of taste, however keen; but there is great sin in not having those feelings towards God and our neighbor which would prevent our gratifying that taste in a fraudulent way.

9. The statement thus far has been brief, but, we trust, lucid. Before proceeding farther, it is proper to pause and consider the views of those who differ with us in the points already made.

First comes Dr. Chalmers, a name that should never be mentioned but with affectionate reverence. Great is our indebtedness to this superb author and thinker, and we should hesitate to dissent from him as strongly as we do, if *he* did not dissent from some of our first American theologians, and also from himself. Besides, while Dr. Chalmers was great and good, truth is greater and better :

" And at thy mystic altar, sacred Truth,
I kneel in manhood as I knelt in youth."

The opinions of this very distinguished man will be learned best from his own words, which we proceed to quote: " We would now affirm the all-important principle, that nothing is moral or immoral which is not voluntary. . . . The first, certainly, of these popular, or rather universal decisions, is, that nothing is moral or immoral that is not voluntary." In illustration of this he supposes a murderer to force a dagger into the hand " of the dearest friend or relative of his devoted victim, and by his superior strength, to compel the struggling and the reluctant instrument to its grasp." " With the one the act was with the will ;

with the other it was against it." . . . The point at which the character of right or wrong comes to be applicable, is the "point where the consent of the will is given." "The essence of crime lies in its wilfulness." "It is for those actions which he himself hath bidden into existence, because it was his will that they should be done—it is not because his desire did solicit, but because his desire did prevail—it is not because his passions and his affections and his sensibilities urged him on to that which is evil, but because his will first fostered their incitements, and then lent itself to their unworthy gratification—it is for this, and this alone, that he is the subject of a moral reckoning." "All crimes that be wilful are tried without benefit of pathology." Pathology, a word borrowed from Bentham, as used in this connection, "will embrace all that we understand by sensations and affections and passions." "We think that Dr. Brown has made a faulty discrimination when he speaks of certain of the emotions which involve in them a moral feeling, and certain others of them which do not. There is no moral designation applicable to any of the emotions, viewed nakedly and in themselves. They are our volitions, and our volitions only, which admit of being thus characterised; and emotions are no further virtuous or vicious than as volitions are blended with them so far as to have given them either their direction or their birth." "Why attach a moral character to the affections, if, independent of will, they take their rise in the organic necessities of our nature?" "So little, in fact, may there be of a moral ingredient in the mere emotion," etc., etc.

The quotations might be multiplied to almost any extent, but these will suffice to show that the author allowed no proper moral character to either desires or emotions. The will, and nothing but the will, has any moral quality. To use an illustration of our own, the acid in a glass of lemonade has no sweetness of itself; the sugar may be said, in loose phraseology, to sweeten the mixture, or to sweeten the acid; but properly speaking, it is only the sugar that is sweet. "The volitions, and the voluntary deeds which come out of them, they are these, and these alone, which form the proper objects of moral censure or moral approbation."

The copper used as an alloy, never ceases to be copper, although it disappears from sight, and might vaguely be said to have become part of a silver coin.

That Dr. Chalmers is not quite consistent with himself, and that some of his expressions cannot be easily reconciled with the above quotations, was due to the exigencies of the case.

10. The other distinguished writer to whom we refer is Dr. McCosh. A benignant Providence has given this eminent educator to America. As he is still living, it would be improper to indulge in encomiums, yet it is a fitting occasion to express the great satisfaction we have derived from his writings, both prior and subsequent to his coming to our shores. We appreciate most highly the services he has rendered in the contest with infidel scientists, and we applaud his standing up for justice as an independent and imperishable attribute of the divine character; and we should regret to have his great name give weight and currency to any erroneous principle in morals. Our quotations are from the eighth edition of his "Divine Government."

"We regard the will as the seat of all virtue and vice. There is an act of the will wherever there is choice, preference, or resolution—wherever the will has adopted or sanctioned any particular mental state—wherever there is wish, desire, or volition. There is nothing either moral or immoral in a mere intellectual act, or in a mere sensation, or a mere emotion, considered in themselves; but whenever the will chooses these, gives its consent to them—*there* virtue or vice may exist.

"We are happy to find our views on this subject coinciding in the main with those of Dr. Chalmers," (whose pupil, we understand, he was.) "We cannot agree with those who, as Cousin and Jouffroy, think that no state of the mind is sinful but a positive volition. If we know that the object is forbidden, and still wish it, still desire it, and are prevented only by certain providential considerations from determining upon the acquisition of it, the act is undoubtedly sinful. If we are restrained by a hatred of sin, the desire is not sinful. It is a wish (then) to obtain, not the object with all its sinful concomitants, but the pleasure, honor, or society, as separated from the object. But if, after knowing the object to be forbidden, or that we cannot obtain it without its necessarily attendant sin, we still continue to long for it, then the very concupiscence is criminal, as the will is giving its consent to its continuance. 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.'"

A long foot-note, beginning on page 311, states some points of dissent from Dr. C. "It is at this point that we differ from Dr. Chalmers."

After referring to Dr. Brown as an "ingenious speculator," whose influence over Chalmers was not beneficial, he proceeds thus:

"Chalmers has hurried in to snatch volition, or the final resolution to act, from the list of mere emotions, and to place it by itself, as a separate mental operation. We are inclined to think that he should have gone further, and taken from the mere emotions not only positive volition, but wish and desire, and placed the whole in a separate department of the human mind, the region of the will, which is the seat of responsibility. We were long sadly puzzled with this whole subject, especially in its bearing upon ethics. We put the question, are mere emotions morally approvable, or the opposite? and we had to answer that they are not. What actions, then, we asked, are moral or immoral in their nature? and we were taught to reply, acts of the will. But may not wishes, desires, and affections be holy or unholy? Here we paused for a time. On the one hand we were inclined to think that affections and desires might be virtuous or vicious. Were not the desires of the Psalmist holy when he said 'My soul thirsteth for God?' Then our Saviour has said, 'Whosoever looketh on a woman,' etc. But on the other hand, wishes and desires, according to the received doctrine, are mere emotions, and can in themselves possess no moral quality. We continued for a time in this painful state of perplexity. We felt relieved beyond measure when the thought occurred that wishes and desires and affections, into which wish and desire enter, are not emotions, but exercises of a higher power. Following out this view, we were constrained to shift the boundary line between feeling and will, from the place at which it has commonly been laid down, but we found that, in doing so, we were drawing the essential distinction, both in a psychological and ethical point of view."

10. On these long quotations, several things are to be said. First, that Dr. McCosh goes a step nearer to what we consider the truth than Dr. Chalmers did. Dr. Chalmers denied all morality to desires. Dr. McCosh cannot coincide with him. Well might Dr. McCosh "pause for a time," before adopting so extraordinary a view. Secondly. Such general propositions as the one that all sin is voluntary, should be very carefully scrutinised. What is meant by *sin*, and what is meant by *voluntary*? If by sin we mean outward actions, then it is unquestionably true that

we are not responsible for any outward action which does not proceed from a volition. This we conceive to have been the original sense of the adage, "*Omne peccatum est voluntarium.*" As thus understood, it expresses the universal conviction of the race of man; but pressed beyond this original sense, it may be made to inculcate serious error.

A more lucid method is to consider the contradictory proposition: "Nothing involuntary is sinful." If by involuntary, we mean *not proceeding from a volition*, then the maxim is true of external bodily actions. A spasmodic contortion of the muscles can hardly be called an action at all, and certainly has no moral character. If the meaning of the term voluntary be extended so as to include our volitions, then again it is true that some volitions are sinful, and that a volition that is not our own, is not our own sin. For instance, if a man were possessed of a devil, and this indwelling devil, by his own volitions, should originate the bodily actions of the demoniac, the volitions might be sinful enough, but would not be the sins of the demoniac. The same may be said of purposes.

At the next step the trouble begins. By common consent, the dividing line which separates the domain of the will into two departments, is drawn just here, leaving the purposes and the volitions to the will, and putting the desires, emotions, and affections in a class by themselves, under some such designation as that of the sensibilities. If the term voluntary means only *proceeding from the volitions*, then desire is involuntary; and if nothing involuntary is sinful, then desire is not sinful. This is the pitfall into which Dr. Chalmers fell; and his doing so is the more remarkable, when we reflect that our volitions themselves do not proceed from volitions, and by the same course of reasoning would not be sinful. But if the term voluntary be so extended as to include our desires, then desire is voluntary, and may be sinful, even if "nothing involuntary is sinful." This was the great step which brought unmeasured relief to the mind of Dr. McCosh.

Thirdly. We honor Dr. McCosh for submitting his intellect to the plain teachings of the Word of God. Trained up in a false theory, he bursts through it, because it does not square with the

Scriptures. If the Bible teaches anything at all, it teaches that desires and affections do have a moral quality. Everywhere God claims our affections; everywhere men are commanded to love him as their highest duty, and are condemned for setting their affections on inferior objects. Surely the great love wherewith God has loved us, is a moral perfection. The contemplation of it fills the heavenly hosts with wonder and delight, and imparts a new thrill to their songs of adoration. How men of piety and discernment, with the open Bible in their hands, have ever failed to see all this, would amaze us, if the whole history of speculation in the Christian Church did not furnish so many parallels. Our fund of amazement has long been exhausted.

We are far from a pietistic decrying of human reason. We admire that freedom from such a spirit which we see in Chalmers and Alexander and McCosh. But on the other hand, the Scriptures are a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. In one of our latest interviews with Dr. R. J. Breckenridge, he advanced the thought that fallen man cannot evoke from his own bosom a perfect system of moral philosophy. It is a matter of congratulation, therefore, when any influential and skilful laborer in that department bows to the authority of Scripture, and is willing to reconstruct his philosophical system in order to square it with the Bible.

11. But what of our emotions? Have they no proper moral quality? As Drs. Chalmers and McCosh coincide in saying that they have not, while we are firmly persuaded that they have, it will be necessary to exercise patience and discrimination in the discussion.

We say, then, that some of our emotions do not, and that others do have a moral character. The same is true of our desires. The desire for food, either to appease our hunger or to gratify the palate, is neither right nor wrong *per se*. It may have a *quasi* moral character, if it leads us to commit fraud. So with the desire of pleasure, of honor, of society, instanced by Dr. McCosh. But as we have already intimated, we do not like his analysis of the wrongfulness of such feelings. For example, the desire for property is intrinsically neither right nor wrong,

and, in strictness of speech, never becomes so. A disregard of God's law and of justice, may lead to the sin of fraud. So hunger and thirst may be gratified to the injury of our bodies, and even to the destruction of life; yet, strictly speaking, hunger and thirst never have any moral quality.

But a desire to glorify God is positively holy. A desire to render to all men their dues, distributive justice as it is called, is certainly right. Dr. Chalmers falls into singular confusion of thought, when he arrays principle against emotion. Principle, in his use of the term, is an habitual desire to do right. It is just as really and truly a desire as any other that belongs to our nature. Now, is the desire to do right, because it is right, virtuous? Dr. Chalmers perpetually asserts that it is. His calling it principle does not alter the case. A desire to serve Satan, and to promote his cause on the earth, cannot be free from sin.

The same distinctions apply to the emotions. The pleasure we experience in the gratification of bodily taste, in the enjoyment of society, in the contemplation of the beautiful or the sublime, is never, properly speaking, right or wrong—never. It may have the same kind of *quasi* moral character with a desire, as when our delight in the creature is greater than our delight in the Creator, who is over all, God blessed forevermore.

But it is quite otherwise with joy in God, delight in his holy perfections, and glorying in the Lord who is our strength and our song, who also is become our salvation. Quite otherwise, too, with a rejoicing in iniquity, and in the success of Satan's efforts to ruin men.

It may be admitted that our good and our bad desires and emotions resemble one another *generically*. That is, joy is always joy; but joy in view of God's glory has a very different moral character from joy in view of a triumph of Satan. Edwards, in his masterpiece on the Affections, has shown that no new faculties are implanted in us by regeneration. Not new faculties, but new principles. But this touches on the formal cause of sin, the reason why certain things are sinful or the contrary.

12. What, then, is the testimony of the Scriptures? What are the fruits of the Spirit? Love, joy, peace, etc. Joy and peace certainly are feelings, and the joy and peace of the Spirit are holy feelings. Christ says by the mouth of David, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." The doing of God's will gave him a holy delight. Paul delighted in the law of God after the inward man; *i. e.*, in the exercise of his renewed nature. There is a godly sorrow,* and yet sorrow is an emotion. Thankfulness is an emotion, and is not gratitude acceptable to God? That overwhelming sense of God's goodness which caused President Edwards to spend days in his closet, weeping from unutterable joy and inexpressible complacency in the glory of the Redeemer—shall we be told that after all it had no intrinsic moral quality, because emotion is involuntary, and holiness is voluntary? So, at the dedication of Solomon's temple, when the Levites sang, "For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever," and every God-touched heart felt that he was ineffably, divinely good, was there no holiness in those emotions, welling up spontaneously from the depths of the soul, and neither requiring nor rejecting "the consent of the will?" Jehovah does not appear to have regarded it so; for such was the effulgence of the shekinah, that the priests could not stand to minister at the altar by reason of the glory.

Who can doubt that God is pleased when we come to him, feeling that "it is good to draw nigh to him?" Among all the Psalms, President Edwards has selected the 119th as most fully expressive of the exercises of renewed souls. David speaks of rejoicing in the way of God's testimonies; of delighting himself in his commandments; of his comfort in affliction. The divine word was sweet to his taste; yea, sweeter than honey to his mouth. God's testimonies were the rejoicing of his heart. He was grieved when transgressors kept not the word of the Lord. He rejoiced at God's word, as one that found great spoil. We know not how these testimonies strike other minds; to our own, they present an unanswerable argument. †

* ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη.

† We would cordially recommend to every devout reader, Bridge's Exposition of the 119th Psalm. The author was an evangelical minister in the Church of England, and his work breathes the pure spirit of devotion.

13. This argument from the Scriptures of course has been very brief, and gives only a faint idea of the fulness of the proof that might be adduced. The fact is, that the Bible is saturated with the truth which we have so imperfectly presented. We do not believe that a plain reader of God's word, unbiassed by scholastic theories, ever drew any other inference from its sacred teachings than that our feelings are proper objects of moral praise and censure.

14. This is corroborated by the uninspired hymnology of the Church. Says Charles Wesley, in one of his beautiful hymns,

"Thy love in sufferings be my peace,
Thy love in weakness make me strong;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Thy love shall be in heaven my song."

He prays for emotions on earth; he will give utterance to emotions in heaven.

Quotations might be multiplied to any extent from such a book; for instance, as Dr. Schaff's "Christ in Song," that treasure-house of ancient, mediæval, and modern praise, of which Dr. Hodge remarks, (Vol. II., p. 591,) "We want no better theology and no better religion than are set forth in these hymns. They were indited by the Holy Spirit, in the sense that the thoughts and feelings which they express, are due to his operations on the hearts of his people."

15. Beside devotional writers, Dr. A. Alexander takes strong ground against Dr. Chalmers. It is rather wonderful, that one reared in that early day, in the Valley of Virginia, and with the limited means of education which he enjoyed in his youth, should have been so acute a metaphysician as Archibald Alexander. We first saw this venerable man in the library of Princeton Seminary. Age had bowed his form, and well-nigh destroyed the melody of his once singularly musical voice. His very unassuming manners, too, scarcely allowed you to feel that you were in the presence of greatness; so that it is only in later years, and from deliberate comparison of him with other thinkers, that we have done justice to his uncommon penetration. Dr. Hodge was his pupil, and, as we suppose, learned from him those great principles of

theology and philosophy of which the pupil has become so illustrious a defender. As against the notion that the will must consent before there is virtue or vice, we quote from p. 186, Vol. II.: "The Protestant doctrine which pronounces these impulsive acts (*i. e.*, of the feelings and affections,) to be of the nature of sin, is confirmed by the consciousness of the believer. He recognises as evil in their own nature, the first risings of malice, envy, pride, or cupidity. He knows that they spring from an evil or imperfectly sanctified nature. They constitute part of the burden of corruption which he hopes to lay down in the grave; and he knows that as he shall be free from them in heaven, they never disturbed the perfectly holy soul of his blessed Lord, to whose image he is even now bound to be conformed."

16. May not Dr. McCosh be quoted against himself, when he says, (p. 303,) "When the conscience declares the action presented to the mind to be good or bad, certain emotions instantly present themselves. Man is so constituted, that the contemplation of virtuous and vicious action—declared so to be by the conscience—like the contemplation of pleasure and pain, awakens the sensibility."

Now, if Dr. McC. will admit, and we do not really see how he can fail to admit, that these emotions partake of a moral character, he will have added greatly to the perfection of his system. Again, Dr. McC. agrees with Bishop Butler in stoutly maintaining the character of conscience as a judge, and quotes from his second sermon on Human Nature: "We cannot form a notion of this faculty without taking in judgment." He himself says, "conscience declares," "declared by conscience." We then have conscience-perceptions. Are they not moral perceptions? Is it not *right* to judge truly of moral subjects? Right to justify the righteous? Right to condemn the wicked? And wrong to do the reverse? Then, if our judgments, in view of certain actions, are *right*, why deny that moral character to the emotions awakened? If it is right to *judge* that any given act of cruelty is wrong, is it not right to *feel* horror at the act? No sense of the word voluntary is wide enough to include the understanding; it would be a misnomer; but the ancient sense of voluntary did

include sensibility. Farther on we will review his very ingenious answer to this. (p. 288.)

17. Among the writers on this side the Atlantic, Jonathan Edwards has given special attention to the Affections. It will be borne in mind that Dr. Chalmers contends that our desires have no original and intrinsic moral character, and that Dr. McCosh dissents from that view. It will be remembered, also, that these two writers agree in denying any moral character to emotions. Furthermore, it will be borne in mind, that the affections are compounded of emotions and desires. Edwards does not dwell upon the distinction between the two elements, but classing them both together, presents the scriptural argument to show "that true religion, in great part, consists in the affections." This proposition is reiterated time and again. Section 4th begins thus: "The holy Scriptures do everywhere place religion very much in the affection; such as fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal." After citing a number of passages under each of these heads, he says:

"I have mentioned but a few texts out of an innumerable multitude, all over the Scripture, which place religion very much in the affections. But what has been observed may be sufficient to show that they who would deny that most of true religion lies in the affections, and maintain the contrary, must throw away what we have been wont to own for the Bible, and get some other rule by which to judge of religion."

"6. The religion of the most eminent saints we have an account of in the Scripture, consisted much in holy affection."

He instances David, Paul, and John. Under the 7th head, he gives our Redeemer as a great example of the same truth.

"8. The religion of heaven consists very much in affection."

But the whole of the first part of this celebrated treatise is devoted to this very question, and we refrain from further quotation.

Dr. McCosh would of course accept a large part of what Edwards says in this connection. Much of holiness and much of sin consists in desire; but no part of either of them consists in emotion.

18. It is necessary, therefore, to select some mere emotions from the various mental exercises mentioned by Edwards. As our emotions give rise to our desires, they ordinarily go together, and one name is given to the two, as Dr. McCosh clearly notes in the affection of love. He quotes approvingly from Dr. Brown: "The analysis of love presents us with two elements—a vivid delight in the contemplation of the object of affection, and a desire of good to that object." Dr. McC., however, proceeds to say: "We do regard it as of great importance to distinguish these two elements. The one may exist, and often does exist, without the other." It is to the "vivid delight" that he denies any moral quality; and this is the precise point in which we would, with great respect to him, dissent *toto caelo*.

But as we are just now concerned with Edwards's view, we select some of the mere emotions. His text is 1 Pet. i. 8: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "There were two kinds of operation, or exercise of true religion—love to Christ, joy in Christ." Now, joy is not a desire. Edwards himself draws the distinction, although, for his purposes, it was unnecessary to dwell upon it. We desire "something not present;" we joy in "something present," that is pleasing to us; but if that present something be very displeasing, we experience grief or sorrow. "The Scriptures speak of holy joy as a great part of true religion. So it is represented in the text." He then quotes from the Old Testament and from the New, as many as ten passages to the point. So again with sorrow. "This godly sorrow and brokenness of heart is often spoken of, not only as a great thing in the distinguishing character of the saints, but that in them which is peculiarly acceptable and pleasing to God."

Compassion, also, is an emotion. It is of course followed by a desire to relieve its object from suffering when such relief is possible. But when help is impossible, and desire dies, compassion, sweet consoler of sorrow, bends over her and weeps! We are exhorted to "rejoice with them that rejoice" in obtained mercies; and to "weep with them that weep" under present and irremovable afflictions. Hence, also, Edwards cites the instance of

Christ's weeping over Jerusalem. Hope, which involves desire, had fled; and for this very reason the tears came from the inmost recesses of the Redeemer's heart. Emotion could no longer manifest itself in desire and consequent effort; now the undying sentiment itself wells forth in streams of pity. This incident is one of the gems of Luke's gospel. As the child of God ponders upon it, he hangs trembling and tearful over the incarnate mystery, over the unfathomable depths of this compassion. Was it the human, or was it the divine in thee, O Christ, thou brightness of the Father's glory, veiled in our flesh? Or did thy two natures ineffably coöperate without composition or confusion?

Dr. Chalmers seems specially averse to allowing sympathy a place among moral exercises; yet "we have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities," Heb. iv. 15, where the very word sympathise is chosen by inspiration, *μη δυνάμενον συμπαθεῖσαι.*

If, then, our mere emotions, acting without desire, have a moral quality, we see no reason why they should not have it when they are followed by desire. Whether they are or are not thus followed, depends not on the intrinsic nature of the emotion, but very much upon the possibility of our effecting anything to which the emotion prompts us—that is, of course, the possibility as viewed by us.

We have been looking at this subject chiefly from a scriptural standpoint; but descending to the psychological plane, which is not so far above the mists of speculation, we think the case is sufficiently clear. Emotion gives rise to desire, and desire to volition, and volition to action. This view is self-consistent, and makes man a unit. His operations are harmonious. Why does he desire that fruit which he beholds? Because he thinks it is pleasant to the taste. But if, on trial, it proves bitter and nauseous, he throws it disdainfully away. He desires it no more.

We make the emotions the ultimate part of our nature. Such was the view of that profound thinker, Isaac Taylor. Dr. Chalmers himself copiously affirms it in his *Moral Philosophy*. We ask him only to be consistent with himself.

When the question arises why we desire anything, the final answer must be, to gratify some emotion. The character of that emotion descends to the desire. The former is the fountain of which the latter is the stream. We never desire to glorify God until we first delight in him. The delight creates the desire.

We fully endorse Dr. Hodge when he says that our intuitions are a revelation from God. Now, is delight, in view of God's holiness, destitute of all moral character? It constitutes the joy of heaven. We conceive that, of all things in that blessed abode, where brokenness of heart is unknown, it is most pleasing to the Holy One. Do we not *intuitively* believe that it is a holy exercise?

19. Dr. McCosh is, on the whole, more logical and more self-consistent, we take it, than Dr. Chalmers. But it is sometimes a dangerous thing to be logical and self-consistent; such persons are apt to push *ἂ πρῶτον ψεύδος* to extremes; a crack in the foundation runs up to the very top of the wall.

For instance, on page 313 we find this: "There is often, on the one hand, the delight in the object, *the selfish delight*, without the desire of good."

But is all delight selfish? Impossible! Dr. Brown so utterly overthrew that idea, that we are surprised to see it reappear. If it gives us unfeigned delight to see others happy and holy, does that imply selfishness in us? If we are willing to lay down our lives for the brethren, and feel abundantly compensated by the joy of seeing them safe, are we selfish?

Again, nothing seems clearer to a Calvinist than that choice is determined by the comparative strength of our desires. When we desire only one thing, and it is immediately attainable, we proceed at once to volition. If it is not immediately attainable, we form a purpose. But when we desire more than one thing, and the getting of one prevents the getting of another; when, in other words, we have conflicting desires, we *choose*. As, if we are offered our choice of two goblets, the understanding pronounces the golden one more desirable than the silver. If the golden goblet alone were offered, the total amount of our desire would prompt a volition to take it. But when a choice must be

made, our preference is measured by the excess of our desire for the one over our desire for the other. This is plain enough. But the Arminians have feigned a new judge or arbiter, under the old name of the will, and give him authority over the rest of our nature. The will, forsooth, has a self-determining power, sovereign, mayhap capricious; a Norman conqueror, imported from foreign parts, as a ruler over the other estates of the realm.

If our psychological account be correct, our main positions follow necessarily. It is essential to the logical consistency of Dr. McCosh, to interpolate in the process the action of some such power as the Arminians contend for. Let us see. Page 272: "In making this choice, we are no doubt swayed by considerations, but these have their force given to them by the will itself, which may set a high a value upon them, but which may also, if it please, set them at defiance." Page 273: "We maintain that these volitions are not determined . . . by the last act of the judgment, nor by emotions within the mind, as the higher order of British and American Necessarians seem to assert, but by the very nature of the will itself as an independent self-acting power. In this high and important sense, the will may be said to possess a self-determining power; that is, a power of determining its own volitions." Page 269: "So far as the true is preferred to the false, or the right to the wrong, or the pleasurable to the right, it is by the exercise not of the reason, or the conscience, or the sensibility, but of the will. Nor is it saying anything to the point, to declare that the will always chooses the greatest good; for it is the will that determines it in this sense to be good, and the greatest good. The will, no doubt, does prefer the pleasurable in itself to the painful, but it is because it wills to do so."

In consistence with this, he takes exception to a part of Edwards's theory, and tries to show that (page 274, note,) "the older divines, even those of the school of Augustine and Calvin, including Calvin himself and John Owen, agree with him as against Edwards.

On all which we remark:

(1) It is far from our purpose to intimate that Dr. McC. is an Arminian. We suppose him to be in feeling, as well as in the

body of his doctrine, averse to that system. But, to show that his view respecting the emotions of the human soul is unsound, we adduce the logical result of that view, to wit: that his phraseology on the subject of man's freedom is almost identical with that which Edwards condemns in Arminian writers. See section 2d of the treatise on the Freedom of the Will.

(2) The quotation which he makes from Henry's Life of Calvin, (from a letter of Calvin to Pighius,) does not meet the case. Calvin is contending against the notion that the will acts under compulsion from without. "It is not constrained or impelled irresistibly from without, but determines itself by itself." Life of Calvin, Vol. I., p. 497. See, also, p. 499. We imagine that the disciples of Edwards all believe this. According to Dr. Alexander, man has the power of self-determination; his own desires determine his volitions; external things furnish only the objects on which his affections fasten. So Hodge says, (Vol. II., p. 285,) that a man is free when his volitions are "determined by nothing out of himself, but proceeding from his own views, feelings, and immanent dispositions, etc." Again, on page 288, "The will is not determined by any law of necessity; it is not independent, indifferent, or self-determined, but is always determined by the preceding state of mind." But this is leading us too far from our main subject.

In consistence with his other views, Dr. McC. represents "a desire of good, a simple, disinterested desire of good," as belonging to "the region of a higher faculty" than that of the emotions. In our conception of the subject, emotion is seated on the throne and sways the sceptre; desire is the minister, standing below the throne, and executing the royal orders.

We have dissented strongly from Dr. McC., but we trust that we have done so courteously throughout the discussion. Perhaps no one has a higher opinion than we have of his great ability, or considers America more fortunate in securing his services.

20. Will and sensibility having been sufficiently adverted to, it remains to inquire whether the intellect should be included as a part of the *causa materialis* of sin. May sin or holiness be predicated of our perceptions? Do our standards speak the

truth when they charge corruption on our whole nature? And is our depravity, in this sense, *total*, as distinguished from partial? Dr. Hodge's view seems to us the scriptural one. Page 262, Vol. II.: "Everywhere in the Scriptures it is asserted or assumed that the feelings follow the understanding; that the illumination of the mind in the due apprehension of spiritual objects, is the necessary preliminary condition of all right feeling and conduct." "We must know God in order to love him. This is distinctly asserted by the Apostle, in 1 Cor. ii. 14. He there says: (1) That the natural or unrenewed man does not receive the things of the Spirit. (2) The reason why he does not receive them is declared to be that they are foolishness unto him, or that he cannot know them. (3) And the reason why he cannot know them is that they are spiritually discerned. It is ignorance, the want of discernment of the beauty, excellence, and suitableness of the things of the Spirit, (*i. e.*, of the truths which the Spirit has revealed,) that is the reason or cause of unbelief."

He adduces other passages of Scripture to the same point. It is eternal life to know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. The god of this world blinds the eyes of men, that they may perish. But God gives the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ, to the objects of his grace. He sanctifies them by his truth.

In addition to this biblical argument, he says: "The affections suppose an object. They can be excited only in view of an object. If we love, we must love something. . . . To call love into exercise, it is necessary that the mind should apprehend God as he really is. Otherwise the affection would be neither rational nor holy."

This seems to us not only true, but nearly self-evident. Again, on page 255, under the heading, "The whole soul the seat of original sin," we read, (section 2,) "The opposite doctrine assumes that there is nothing moral in our cognitions or judgments; that all knowledge is purely speculative. Whereas, according to the Scriptures, the chief sins of men consist in their wrong judgments, in thinking and believing evil to be good, and good to be

evil. . . . Every exercise of our cognitive faculties in relation to moral and religious subjects, includes the exercise of our moral nature."

This is in full accord with the Westminster Standards. Chap. X., Of Effectual Calling, speaks of ". . . enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God." Answer 67, of the Larger Catechism, ". . . savingly enlightening their minds." Answer 31 of Shorter Catechism, ". . . convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills," etc.

With this, too, agrees the view of Dr. Alexander, in his *Moral Science*, viz., that conscience, like taste, has a double office—to perceive moral qualities and to feel a consequent approbation or disapprobation; and that depravity blinds the mind on moral subjects.

It surely is a moral perfection in God to judge unerringly that right is right and wrong is wrong. Men are condemned for not believing; but if their moral nature were not perverted, they would never be guilty of unbelief. The moral evidence alone would be all-sufficient; and beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, they would respond at once and fully to the Redeemer's exhortation: "Believe *Me*, that I am in the Father, and the Father in *Me*."

It is important to bear in mind, however, the subordination of the intellectual to the emotional part of our nature. The end of the commandment is love. "I have declared unto them thy name," (*i. e.*, made known to them thy true character,) "and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

21. Last of all, in addition to these active states of the soul, and back of them all, are the dispositions, immanent states, principles, or habits, as they are variously called. There is a reason why men habitually feel and act in one way rather than another; and the common consent of the race refers this to dispositions and states. When we see a man acting uniformly in an amiable way, we conclude that he is blest with an amiable disposition; we say he is an amiable man. In one sense, the *character* of a man

is the sum total of his dispositions; his moral character consists of his moral dispositions; for some of these immanent states have no moral quality, as, for example, a studious disposition.

Now these states of the mind are anterior to exercises of any kind: yet some of them undoubtedly do have a moral character. This has been stoutly denied; and it has been affirmed by way of a theological witticism, that all sin consists in sinning. "Abelard held that nothing was properly of the nature of sin but an act performed with an evil intention." (Hodge, Vol. II., p. 170.) We cannot enter into an argument on this point.

To conclude: Our whole nature is affected by sin; even our bodies are made its instruments; though of course the body is not the true seat of sin, as the Manichees held. But every part of the soul is infected with this mortal malady, and regeneration gives us new dispositions, new views, new feelings and desires, new choices, purposes, and volitions, and new words and deeds. In a word, we are new men in Christ Jesus.

Once more: It is a thing fraught with peril to deny a moral character to anything that possesses sin. If our desires, emotions, judgments, and states are sinful, and we, from some false theory, deny it, on the ground that they have no moral character, or on any other ground, our highest interests are endangered. A genuine Christian experience will triumph over erroneous theories. God's Word and Spirit will lead us in the way to heaven, despite of our speculations; yet the tendency of these speculations may be, all the while, evil and only evil, and their actual effects hurtful, even when not destructive.