

# THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXVIII.—NO. 3.

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JULY, MDCCCLXXVII.

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## ARTICLE I.

### A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE PATRIARCHS AND MOSES.

The Church considered in this sketch is the Church visible, that community which consists of all who "profess the true religion, together with their children."

No man, with a spark of liberal curiosity, can contemplate this community as it now exists amongst men, without desiring to know something of its history and its origin. The same motive, if no higher, which induced the first explorer to ascend from the delta of the Mississippi to the springs from which it flows, would induce the student of man to trace the course of that institution which has, in such a marked degree, moulded the character and fixed the destiny of so large a portion of our race. And if, like the adventurous travellers who for centuries sought for the sources of the Nile, the inquirer should be again and again baffled in his researches, the disappointment may serve as a wholesome discipline for his faith and patience, if he be a believer in God, and prepare him for the glorious discovery that the Church took its rise not in any feeble fountains of earth, but in the vast "nyanza," or ocean, rather, of the bosom of God; that it is the unfolding of "the economy of the mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God," the demonstration "to princi-

enveloping atmosphere of falsehood in history and sophisms in philosophy, has nothing before it but to unlearn its heresies in a fearful school of experience. And what prospect has the South for just or even merciful rule, when subjugated by a people who believe Senator Wilson's black representations about us? *His book has passed already through four editions.* The disdainful and imperious North, pleased to see those whom she has violently crushed accused of all guilty things, will never condescend to look at any reply, until a retributive Providence compels her to read it in the calamitous fruits of her creed.

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ARTICLE III.

Dr. BLEDSOE'S PHILOSOPHY OF VOLITION.

*An Examination of President Edwards's Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will.* By ALBERT TAYLOR BLEDSOE. Philadelphia: H. Hooker. 1845. 12mo., pp. 234.

*A Theodicy, etc.* By A. T. BLEDSOE, LL.D. New York: Carlton & Porter. 1856. 8vo., pp. 368.

*Vindication of our Philosophy.* By the Rev. A. T. BLEDSOE, LL.D. *Southern Review*, Art. V., January, 1877. Pp. 54.

The nature of free agency constitutes much the most important problem in the whole range of philosophy. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to claim for it an importance greater than all the rest of philosophy together, after man's rationality is admitted. The connexions of this problem with theology are manifold and vital. As is one's philosophy of the will, such, if he is a consistent thinker, must be his theory of providence, of foreknowledge, of the decree, of original sin, of regeneration, of the perseverance of the saints, of responsibility. The most momentous things to man, in all the universe of space and time, are responsibility, sin, penalty, and redemption. But one of the clearest of our intuitions tells us that free agency is essential to

a just responsibility, to guilt and merit, to reward and penalty. What, then, is, free agency? What are its real conditions? This must ever be the question of questions.

Dr. Bledsoe has seen clearly this fact; and hence all the discussions of his Examination of Edwards, his Theodicy, his debate with the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW from 1871 to his last thundering broadside, January, 1877, are virtual or actual discussions of free agency. When we add the other fact, that no point in philosophy has been surrounded with more of confusion, ambiguous definition, and prejudice, the thoughtful mind will need no apology for our continuance of this vital discussion. A special and practical reason exists for carrying it, in this case, to a thorough result. This is the mischief which Dr. Bledsoe is unconsciously doing among evangelical Christians and ministers. He has been an Episcopalian and is now a Methodist minister. He stoutly declares he is no Pelagian; he considers himself quite a Pauline divine. His theory of free agency retrenches some of the untenable logic of his school, and frankly admits some of the positions and arguments of the orthodox philosophy. Especially does he teach his errors with an equal vigor of thought and style and obvious integrity of purpose. The sad result is, that he is forming the opinions of a multitude of young Christians, and ministers even, in the Episcopal, a Calvinistic, Church, to what will turn out, in their cases, bald and poisonous Pelagianism and Socinianism. These young men, scantily furnished, perhaps, in the history of doctrine and philosophy, adopt Dr. Bledsoe's conclusions, unconscious that they contain the very rudiments of those heresies, supposing them to be new (and safe) results of his original discussions. But they will, we fear, think too connectedly to adopt also the happy inconsistencies by which Dr. Bledsoe arrests himself; and they will be plunged into deadly errors, which he, with us, will lament. We are convinced thus, that there is nothing in Southern, or even in American, theological literature, more important than a thorough adjustment of this debate.

Dr. Bledsoe's reply to our very courteous and measured argument of last October, is delivered with unspeakable energy, and

eloquence of invective. He professes to see in the provocation nothing but imbecility and ignorance. But his readers are asking, "Why, then, this effort?" Why should leviathan thus "tempest the deep" to crush a minnow? Would he fill the whole sea with bloody foam, unless the lance of his little assailant had pierced consciously to his vitals? He complains that his theory of free agency has been criticised without ever having been read; that he is represented as holding exactly what he repudiates and refutes; that page and word have not been quoted faithfully from his *Examination of Edwards and Theodicy*, to show what he really holds. Now, a sufficient reply to this loud complaint would be to say that *neither of these works was placed at the head of our critique*; that we did not undertake specially to discuss them at that time, but only to defend ourselves and the truth from the aggressions contained in the pieces which we expressly named. Is it not preposterous that, when a voluminous writer is taken to account for his recent declarations, he should claim a right to have works of twenty years ago included? But we stoutly assert, as we shall evince, that our recent chastisement of Dr. Bledsoe's trespasses on Presbyterianism was not composed without just understanding of those books. If there remains any appearance of unfairness, it will be removed by remarking, first, that Dr. Bledsoe has, in some cases, very causelessly mistaken his critic as meaning to put propositions into his mouth as Dr. Bledsoe's own, when the thing obviously designed was to show that Dr. Bledsoe's positions were obnoxious to certain absurd corollaries; and second, that it may be entirely feasible for him to quote from his earlier writings what is opposite to positions we do ascribe to him, *because he so contradicts himself*. But that is his misfortune, and not our fault. He complains that we did not cite his own words. We surmise that when we proceed to do this, and show that the same contradictions remain, he will be hardly so well satisfied as he now is. One bitter complaint is, that we charge the virtual tendency of his scheme of free agency to be Pelagian, when it is not. We shall see. Another is, that we accuse him, in his account of the rise of volition, of not seeing the significance of subjective disposition in the matter;

whereas, he claims that he does see and teach all about it. We shall see whether he does. Still another complaint is, that we charge him, in speaking of motive, with overlooking the vital distinction between subjective appetency and objective impressions on the passive sensibility, which, he claims, he has most perspicuously separated. We shall see whether he has. A fourth complaint is, that we make him hold mind itself to be the "efficient" and the "cause" of volitions; whereas, he now wishes to be understood as holding that "mind is not the efficient cause of volition." We shall see whose is the contradiction.

Chiefly Dr. Bledsoe seems to complain, because our review did not again go back and debate his theory of the will. We will endeavor to remove that ground of complaint also. Mere rejoinders, sur-rejoinders, and replications upon personal and partial issues, are little to our taste, and of little fruitfulness. We presume that neither the Presbyterian nor the Methodist public is much interested in that thesis which Dr. Bledsoe pursues with so much zeal and pleasure, viz., that his critic is silly and ignorant. It is more important to settle the question, whether Dr. Bledsoe's way of asserting *the contingency of all responsible volitions* is any more valid than the old way, which, he admits, Edwards has demolished.

Before we proceed, however, to this main object, we wish to show the reader with how much violence our author is in the habit of contradicting himself and the truth. Our purpose is not so much to enjoy our reasonable self-defence against his accusations, as to convince of the real incoherency of Dr. Bledsoe's theory. He contradicts himself because the positions he wishes to occupy are contradictory, and the candor and vigor of his own spirit precipitate him into the pitfalls he has prepared for himself.

Thus we are much berated for representing him as holding that the mind is the efficient or the cause of its own volitions. He tells us that he has asserted the contrary. The latter is perfectly true, both of his books and his Review. Thus, in the latter, p. 11: "All . . . must admit this exemption of the mind in willing from the power and action of any cause. . . . It is this exemption which constitutes the freedom of the human mind." And p.

20: "What he (Dr. Bledsoe) really denies is, that there is *anything*, either in the mind or out of the mind, *which produces volition.*" This is clear enough. But in Section IV. of the Examination of Edwards, and in the Rev., p. 16, he finds himself face to face with the inevitable maxim, *Ex nihilo nihil*; and he admits the absurdity of a change, either in mind or matter, "without any parentage whatever." It is easy to anticipate that the stress of his own common sense must precipitate him into the opposite declarations which we ascribed to him, and it accordingly does so more than once. Thus, on the very page cited (16th), "Volition never comes of itself at all; *it comes of mind.*" "Volition always has its parentage in mind." Is not a "parent" a *cause* to its own offspring? On the same page, he angrily declares *he has not denied* that "volitions have any efficient cause or antecedent *of any kind.*" On p. 21 he declares that original concupiscence, "caused" by Adam's fall, while not itself sinful, is the "source" of all men's sin, and leads uniformly to sin. On page 14 he assures us that he, along with all the advocates of free agency he ever heard of, has maintained always "*that the mind is the cause of volition.*" So also in his Examination of Edwards, we find him saying, p. 47, "Under certain circumstances, the free mind will furnish a SUFFICIENT *reason and ground* of the existence of a volition." Page 48: "I do not deny that it (volition) *depends for its production* upon certain circumstances, as the conditions of action, *and UPON THE POWERS OF THE MIND,*" etc. Page 71: "It is true that President Edwards tells us of those who 'imagine that volition has no cause, or that it produces itself.' . . . But who ever held such a doctrine? . . . I have never been so unfortunate as to meet with any advocate of free agency, either in actual life or in history, who supposed that a volition arose out of nothing, without any cause of its existence, or that it produced itself. They have all maintained, with one consent, that *the mind is the cause of volition.* Is the mind nothing?"

We now ask the candid reader, does not this last passage mean that the mind is the *producing cause* of it? Again, when Dr. Bledsoe says that volition has "its parentage" of the mind, that de-



pravity is the "source" of all sins, has he not said in substance, what in another place cited above he has said in words, that the mind is the efficient cause of volitions? Is not the cause which produces a thing efficient thereof? If Dr. Bledsoe desires to use words without sense, he must excuse us; we cannot follow him. If he now means to say that his own words, the mind is "the cause" of its volitions, are meaningless, it is his only excuse, but a very poor one. It is perfectly true that he does contradict himself by stating with the greatest perspicuity and by arguing, that volitions have no true cause, that they are not effects at all; that they are contingent as to all antecedents whatsoever. But this (the stronghold of his philosophy of the will) is yet so utterly incompatible with consciousness and common sense, and with his own admissions, that he cannot avoid declarations equally emphatic on the opposite side; he slips into them by the mere force of nature.

Dr. Bledsoe complains again, that we do him great injustice in saying that he, like many other analysts of mind, has failed to give proper weight to that decisive fact, the influence of disposition, or *habitus*, on volitions. And yet in the same breath he glories in asserting that *he does not ascribe* any important influence to that great fact. Well, that is precisely what we charged and now charge on him as a fatal error. And when we come to test what he so modestly terms that "most careful, conscientious, painstaking, and elaborate discussion," in the 15th Section of his Examination, or 3d Chapter of his Theodicy, in which he impotently endeavors to dispute (what his own common sense makes him in many places assert) that the mind's native dispositions are, and must be, regulative of its volitions, we shall show by the confusions and futility of that argument, the full justice of the charge.

He also complains grievously of our charge, that in discussing the efficiency of motive, he fails to see and use the vital distinction between the objective inducement and the subjective motive. We now proceed to show that this *our charge is exactly true*. This is clearly betrayed by the manner in which Dr. Bledsoe declaims about it, at this very place. (REVIEW, p. 42.) He assures

us that he understands it perfectly, of course; for he proceeds to tell us, "this distinction has never been overlooked by anybody." . . . "We have certainly never known any man or read any author who was so weak or so silly as to overlook such a distinction." But it is a well known fact in the history of philosophy, that the distinction between objective inducement and subjective motive, which we have in view, and of which we were speaking, *has been overlooked*, and that *by all philosophers* of the Sensationalist schools. Hobbes overlooked it; Locke overlooked it; so of course did *Condillac* and *Helvetius*; so did all the fatalistic schools. Yea, more: their very principles necessitated that they should overlook it; because, from their maxim, *Nihil in intellectu, quod non prius in sensu*; in other words, from their analysis of all subjective states of appetency into mere reflexive modifications of states of passive sensibility caused by the objective, they could not, as consistent thinkers, hold or use the distinction. This is notorious. Now, the above assertion of Dr. Bledsoe inevitably proves one of two things: either that *he does not appreciate* that important distinction as we hold it, or that *he is ignorant* of the ordinary history of philosophy. And it is very vain for him to endeavor now to prove his correct appreciation of the difference between objective inducement and subjective motive, by citing to us, as he here does, sentences from his books, in which, wrapping both kinds of antecedents together, under the common promiscuous name of "motive," he asserts of them all indiscriminately, that they are all not efficient, but mere occasions of volition. *That very mode of assertion betrays the justice of our charge.* But we shall not rest it here alone. Sometimes it is hard to "prove a negative." But one evidence in this case, of at least partial weight, is, that the Examination of Edwards may be searched through in vain for an articulate statement or application of the distinction. But more than this: numerous passages imply its rejection. To apprehend these, a word of explanation may be needed. The sensational theory of the soul's powers, with which both English and French psychology were so deeply tinged by the ascendancy of Locke, traced all mental modifications, whether intellectual or emotive, to the



objective impressions. As with it all cognition was empirical, so all emotion was passion. (The very language confounded the words.) The outward impression on feeling was regarded as the *cause* of the emotions which followed. In somewhat the same way as the blow caused the pain in the head of the man struck, so they conceived that the pain caused the resentment, and the resentment caused the volition to double the fist and strike back. Now, if this is the whole account of the emotions of this rational agent, his free agency is illusory. Resentment efficiently determined the volition to hit back; pain from a blow caused the resentment; the blow delivered by another man caused the pain. Thus, while the man struck acts as a sentient agent, he does not act as a self-determined rational one. He is but a sentient machine, whose acts are remotely but efficiently determined from without, not from within. The theory of the causative efficiency of motive, thus expounded, was a theory of fatalism. Such was that of Hobbes; such that of all consistent sensationalists, as well as of theological fatalists.

But a more correct psychology supervened. Scholars grasped the all-important truth, all along practically assumed in the philosophy of the Bible, that the human soul has not only percipient faculties and sensibilities, but, *a priori*, constitutive powers of reason and appetency; that in the emotive sphere of the soul's action, these appetencies (and repulsions) were inherent, subjective, and spontaneous; not functions of passive sensibility, but functions of subjective activity, whose spontaneous movements are merely conditioned on, not caused by, the impressions on sensibility. And they saw, what the Bible had intimated, that it is these subjective desires and repulsions which are the true motives (*motiva*) of volitions. It is this vital distinction which Sir William Hamilton makes under the terms sensibilities and conative powers; and he (erroneously) claims to have been the first to discriminate them clearly. One more important truth remains. The rational agent's "conative powers" do not move at hap-hazard; they have their regulative principle; and this, in every case, is the agent's subjective native disposition, or *habitus*. In the order of causation, disposition is *a priori* to the operation of

inducement, and is not modified by it. It is not the pain of a blow which determines a given human soul to be resentful : but it is the preëxistent resentful disposition which determines that man to resent a blow. It is not applause which causes the spirited young man to desire fame ; but it is the native, preëxistent desire of fame which determines the young man to regard applause as an objective good. When an objective inducement becomes the occasion of an act of soul, as, for instance, a forgotten purse, of a servant's theft, the causative efficiency is not projected from the gold upon the thief's soul, but from the thief's covetous desire, as regulated by his evil disposition, upon the gold. This was established in our article of October last. Now, then, from the point of view of this Bible psychology, the rise of volition becomes intelligible. Our consciousness had told us, on the one hand, as against the Sensationalist scheme of motive, that we are free agents ; that in all our deliberate and responsible volitions, our souls are self-determined. Our common sense and experience had told us, on the other hand, that such volitions cannot be uncaused and contingent changes in the mind ; that the very notion of a rational volition is of one for which the man had a controlling reason ; or, in other words, of one which the motive efficiently prompted. It is because this distinction between subjective motive and objective occasion of choice has not been clearly held to, that nearly all the confusions in the argument have arisen. The great treatise of Edwards, while on the right side, is by no means free from this confusion. All the arguments of Reid (on the Active Powers) against the moral necessity of volitions, are occasioned by this confusion ; and they have force, just so far as they are aimed against the Sensationalist view, which makes the passive sensibility the efficient motive. So, the whole force of Dr. Bledsoe's reasonings against Edwards—so far as they have any force—is from this mingling of the sensationalist theory of necessity, with the true theory of certainty, which views volition as the effect of subjective motive. It is certainly true that Dr. Bledsoe blindly opposes both systems, the correct one and its sensationalist travesty. But the question is, Has he intelligently discriminated therein, and has he seen the decisive

consequence of that discrimination? We again affirm, *he has not*; and we proceed to affirmative proofs from his own works.

Thus, Exam. of Edwards, p. 40, line 2d, Dr. Bledsoe says: "The strength of a motive, as President Edwards properly remarks, depends upon the state of the mind *to which* it is addressed." (There is another fatal admission here, which we reserve.) Now, manifestly, Dr. Bledsoe, like Edwards, confounds motive with objective inducement. Their "motive" is something which "*is addressed to the mind!*" That tells the whole story: it is the objective inducement! He argues in utter obliviousness that the real "motive" is not the thing "addressed *to the mind,*" but the subjective appetency determined by the "state of the mind" to which the object is addressed.

So, p. 75, line 7: "A mind, an object, and a desire, (if you please,) are the indispensable prerequisites, the invariable antecedents to volition; but there is an immense chasm between this position and the doctrine that the mind cannot put forth a volition unless it is made to do so by *the action of something else upon it.*" Here, again, Dr. Bledsoe betrays the fact fatally that he does not perceive what the Calvinist means by efficient motive. He thinks we mean the objective; the "something else" than the mind, that is supposed to "*act upon it.*" He is fighting blindly. This passage also presents another proof of this: that, like so many others in all his writings, it confuses together objective inducement and subjective desire, as all alike *not "causes,"* but "*conditions*" of volitions. Had he seen the proper distinction, he would never have spoken thus; he would have said that the objective is the one thing, namely, the condition only, and the subjective desire is the opposite thing only, namely, the cause.

On p. 89 again, the author fails to apprehend the true doctrine in the same way: "External objects are regarded as the efficient causes of desire; desire as the efficient cause of volition; and in this way the whole question seems to be settled." That is to say, Dr. Bledsoe has still no other apprehension of our doctrine than that of the sensationalist. He thinks that we think desires are *efficiently caused* by external objects! He has not gotten out of the delusion that the desires which we hold prompt volitions, are

functions of the passive sensibility; and this is the doctrine which he opposes. And how does the reader suppose Dr. Bledsoe designs to fight it? By attacking the second link of what he erroneously supposes to be the Calvinist's chain; by denying what he grants every other assertor of free will, besides himself, has held; by denying that such desires have any efficiency as causes of volitions! Thus, p. 92: "Our desires or emotions might be under the influence and dominion of external causes, or of causes that are partly external and partly internal; but yet our volitions would be perfectly free from all preceding influences whatever." Thus, it appears plainly, he is still in the dark. For, we do not hold that our desires or subjective emotions are "under the influence and dominion of external causes." We hold that they arise from within, functions of the soul's own spontaneity, and efficiently regulated by the soul's own permanent *habitus*.

On p. 97, again, the same confusion appears. Dr. Bledsoe asks, "Is it true, then, that any power or efficacy belongs to the *sensitive or emotive* part of our nature?" So, on pp. 99, 100, Dr. Bledsoe cannot accept that law so beautifully expounded by Bishop Butler, that while our passive impressions become blunter from habitual action, (*consuetudo*,) our active principles become stronger. What is his difficulty about it? He tells us that he cannot see how, when the passive function of sensibility is weakening, the effect thereof can be increasing. Still he is in the same fog; he supposes our active desires to be mere functions of passive sensibility. We crown our proof with Dr. Bledsoe's concluding words, p. 102: "The truth is, that in feeling the mind is passive; and it is absurd to make a passive impression the active cause of anything. The sensibility does not *act*, it merely *suffers*. The appetites and passions, which have always been called the 'active powers,' the 'moving principles,' and so forth, should be called the passive susceptibilities. Unless this truth be clearly and fully recognised, and the commonly received notion respecting the relation which the appetites and passions sustain to the will—to the *active power*—be discarded, it seems to me that the great doctrine of the liberty of the will must continue to be involved in the saddest perplexity, the most distressing darkness."

It would not be hard to add many other proofs, as p. 182, (top,) but they are superfluous. It is Dr. Bledsoe who is in "distressing darkness." He has mingled together the functions of conation and sensibility in inextricable confusion, and hence can see no light. The very passage in the Theodicy to which Dr. Bledsoe so confidently appeals to show that *he does appreciate* the vital relations of native, subjective disposition, and of subjective appetency to volition, betrays an ignorance and blindness about the whole truth that are simply pitiable. Does he (Theodicy, pp. 173-4) distribute the powers of the mind into "intelligence, sensibility and will?" Yes. But by "will" he means exclusively here, not Hamilton's "conative powers," not what the Calvinists mean by "will" in its wider sense, the whole subjective activities, including disposition and subjective desires leading to volition; no: but simply and nakedly, the power of choosing, the volition-making power. Either he is ignorant of the *main drift* of our meaning, or he discards it. Then he tells us every act of the intelligence is merely passive. And "*every state of the sensibility is a passive impression!*" Then comes volition, efficiently produced by nothing, within or without the mind, always contingent. These are the only antecedents of free volition of which Dr. Bledsoe knows anything! The Almighty may necessitate states of intelligence (mere passivities) and states of sensibility (mere passivities again) by his agency in providence or regeneration, if he pleases. But he has not thereby communicated either necessity or even certainty of a single right volition in the newborn creature; for those states are only antecedent occasions, not efficient of volition. God may have new created the heart, but the man may still make every volition a sin, if he chooses!

One more of Dr. Bledsoe's complaints of unfairness remains to be noticed. This is, that *we assert his philosophy to be virtually Pelagian*. This charge we did undoubtedly make, and intend to repeat. Now, Pelagius and Celestius taught sundry dogmas, such as baptismal redemption, monkery, the existence of unredeemed infants dying in infancy in a happy eternal state which yet is not the Christian's heaven, which Dr. Bledsoe does not hold; nor does the veriest Socinian on whose modern shoulders Pelagius'



own mantle has fallen, hold them. They are as antiquated as the Ptolemaic Astronomy. These ancient heretics, again, carried out their erroneous first principles with a symmetrical consistency in some results, which we never dreamed of ascribing to Dr. Bledsoe; we do him no such injustice. In these senses he is, if he will prefer it so, no Pelagian. But in Church history, Pelagianism is a given, definite code of doctrines in philosophy and theology, clustering around certain hinge-propositions. These hinge-propositions granted, the essential body of the system follows for all consistent minds. What we mean by calling Dr. Bledsoe a virtual Pelagian is then this: That he asserts these hinge-propositions, and the more obvious and important of their consequences.

The central position of Pelagius and Celestius was this: 1. That volitions are contingent, and uncontrolled by any efficient antecedent either in or out of the mind; and that if they were not, man would neither be a free nor justly responsible agent. Accordingly, 2. They define sin and holiness as consisting only in sinful or right *acts of soul*. They hold, 3. That a natural or original sin or righteousness would be no sin or righteousness, because not chosen by the soul in an originating act of choice. They also hold, 4. That responsibility is absolutely limited by ability, taking "ability" in its scientific sense. Hence, 5. Primal man did not have any positive moral character impressed on him at creation. (If he had, not being the result of his own volition, it would have been as absolutely non-moral, as the natural color of his hair.) But he was *innocent; i. e.* in a state of harmless neutrality at the outset, and had to acquire his own positive moral character in his after career, by right acts of choice. Hence, 6. No power, not even the Almighty, could determine or give certainty to man's free volitions consistently with the nature of his free agency. Hence, also, 7. There can be no such native immoral disposition as that which Calvinists call moral depravity, inherited by children from Adam, for, if original, it would not have originated in the child's act of choice, and so, would have been involuntary and non-moral. Children, therefore, however they may go astray into sin from evil example, are not actually born



depraved. So also, 8. "concupiscence," an appetency for wrong not matured into purpose, although the occasion of sin, is not sin. And last, 9. The recreation of a soul into holiness, in regeneration, would be incompatible with free agency; hence, the gracious agency in regeneration is only suasive; and the change of heart can be, essentially, no more than the sinner's putting forth a hearty volition to change his conduct. Such is the well known outline; it is not necessary to burden the page with an array of names of learned sound, to substantiate the statement. It will not be disputed by the well informed. Our testimony is, that this is virtually Dr. Bledsoe's creed; and that it is not Wesleyan Arminianism. We shall let him speak mainly for himself.

Now, as to the first position, hear him—Theodicy, p. 153: "We lay it down, then, as an established and fundamental position, that the mind acts or puts forth volitions, without being caused to do so—without being impelled by its own prior action or by the prior action of anything else. . . . It is this exemption which constitutes the freedom of the human mind." Exam. of Edwards: "I think we should contend for *a perfect indifference*, not in regard to feeling, but in regard to the will." P. 110.

As to the 2d, it is enough to quote from the REVIEW, p. 28, these words: "*Holiness consists in those things which 'are done' by us according to the will of God, and not in those things which he has given us.*" Can anything be more explicit?

On the 3d point, Dr. Bledsoe is equally explicit. The whole 15th Section of his Exam. of Edwards is but a distillation of this Pelagian heresy. Let this unmistakable sentence suffice, p. 198: "It strikes my mind with the force of self-evident truth, that nothing can be our virtue, unless we are, in some sense, the author of it; and to affirm that a man may be justly praised or blamed, that he may be esteemed virtuous or vicious on account of what he has wholly and exclusively received from another, appears to me to contradict one of the clearest dictates of reason."

That Dr. Bledsoe holds, with all his heart, the 4th Pelagian principle, is sufficiently evinced by this sentence from the Exam. of Edwards, p. 182: "If my volitions are brought to pass by the strength and influence of motives, I am not responsible for them."

On the 5th point, our evidence is superabundant. REVIEW, p. 28, Dr. Bledsoe professes to quote, and adopts expressly these words of another: "Was not primal man *holy*? . . . I answer, innocent, *but not holy*." Exam. of Edwards, p. 199: "I deny that Adam was created or brought into existence righteous." P. 198: "He is neither virtuous nor vicious, neither righteous nor sinful. This was the condition of Adam, as it very clearly appears to me, at the instant of his creation."

On the 6th point, may be quoted, along with many passages from the Theodicy, the following from the REVIEW, p. 34: "Behind this veil of words," (the phrase, "certainty of volitions," used by Calvinists,) "as thin as gossamer, we see the same old thing, *the Scheme of Necessity*, grinning upon us." This latter he declares impossible to be reconciled with free agency. And REV. p. 6, borrowing the words of another: "Therefore, (with reverence be it spoken,) the Almighty himself cannot do this thing."

On the 7th point, Dr. Bledsoe professes, (in some places,) to depart from the consistent Pelagian track. He says, p. 21, that he has always held, in direct opposition to Pelagius, that Adam's sin "caused the depravity of human nature;" and that, while "Adam was created upright, in the image of God," "infants are born with a fallen and depraved nature, and can therefore, never be saved, without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit." Let us pause here a moment, to illustrate the intensity of his self-contradiction, both in thought and word. In this point, he is not, according to his present assertion, a Pelagian; but it is absolute absurdity that he, with his positions, is not a Pelagian here, as in other things. Let the reader note, first, the flat verbal contradiction. On the last page, "Adam was not created holy," only innocent. "I deny that Adam was brought into existence righteous." But now, lo! "Adam *was* created upright." Does not "upright" mean "righteous?" or is there some miserable jugglery in the interchange of these synonyms. But second, Dr. Bledsoe has no business believing that infants are born with a fallen and depraved nature. For, according to his own clearest doctrine on the last page, any quality which is original, *cannot be a moral* quality, not being the acquirement of the agent's own

undetermined, electing act. Any mind that can put two and two together, will see that Dr. Bledsoe is bound to follow his leader here also. Again, he has "dinned into us" his heresy (thoroughly Pelagian) that if a volition is caused efficiently *by anything*, in the man or without, it is not *free*. Then, it is impossible that a free agent can have a native principle in him certainly causative of sinful acts; because, according to Dr. Bledsoe, such acts would not be free. Hence, this doctrine of a depravity which is the "source" of all man's errors, is, in his mouth, utter contradiction and absurdity. Again, Dr. Bledsoe cannot hold that sinners have native depravity and need salvation by grace, as he has said, p. 21 REVIEW; because, in strict accordance with his philosophy, he has assured us, again and again, to the contrary. Thus REVIEW, Jan., 1875, p. 97: "New born infants *deserve no punishment at all.*" April, 1874, p. 353: "*The omnipotence of God himself cannot take away our sins and turn us to himself, without our voluntary consent and co-operation.*" *Does the dying infant give that voluntary, rational consent and co-operation?* Of course not; it is incapable of it. *Then, either it has no original depravity, or dying in infancy, it must, according to Dr. Bledsoe, inevitably be damned by it.* Let him be honest, then, and either go to the Pelagian ground, where he properly belongs, or else admit himself the believer in universal infant damnation. Now, let the reader pause and weigh for himself the inexorable logic of this dilemma. When he has done so, he will say, it is vain for Dr. Bledsoe, according to his wont, to writhe and roar, to scold and vituperate, in the hope of hiding his agony.

On the 8th point, Dr. Bledsoe so "glories in his shame," that it is almost superfluous to quote evidence that he does not think concupiscence is sin. But, as further illustrating his consistency, we quote REVIEW, Jan., 1877, p. 24: "Dr. Dabney says that we appeal to our philosophy 'to deny the sinfulness of original concupiscence.' We do no such thing. We appeal to our consciousness, to the consciousness of all men, and not to any philosophy whatever, to show that *a new born infant is not sinful*, or deserving of punishment on account of what it brings into the

world with it." Yet, he had said, p. 21, that it is born depraved! He then goes on to assert, in manifold terms, that concupiscence is not sin. He is even rash enough\* to quote Augustine, as holding with him.

On the 9th point of the Pelagian scheme which I have mentioned, Dr. Bledsoe, according to that method of absolute self-contradiction which is the chief trait of his philosophy, is both on the Pelagian side and the opposite. Consistency would require him to be all the time on the Pelagian side. If, as he so often holds, volition *cannot be caused* by anything either in the

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\* That Augustine did not exclude concupiscence from his definition of sin is evident from many passages of his writings against the Pelagians: one of which we shall quote from the very treatise cited by Dr. Bledsoe, "Contra duas Epistolas Pelagianorum," Lib. I., Cap. 10: "Magis enim se dicit (Paulus, Rom. vii. 16,) legi consentire quam carnis concupiscentiæ. *Hanc enim peccati nomine appellat.*" In Chapter 13 of the same book there is a passage which will perhaps account for the mistake into which Dr. Bledsoe has fallen. Augustine is explaining in what sense concupiscence *in the baptized* may be called sin and yet not sin: "Sed hæc (concupiscentia) etiamsi vocatur peccatum, non utique quia peccatum est, sed quia peccato facta est, sic vocatur: sicut scriptura manus cujusque dicitur, quod manus eam fecerit. Peccata autem sunt, quæ secundum carnis concupiscentiam vel ignorantiam illicite fiunt, dicuntur, cogitantur; quæ transacta etiam nos tenent, si non remittantur. Et ista ipsa carnis concupiscentia, in baptismo sic dimittitur, ut quamvis tracta sit a nascentibus, nihil noceat resurgentibus."

So also in his "De Nup. et Concup." I. 26: "In eis, qui regenerantur in Christo, cum remissionem accipiunt prorsus omnium peccatorum, utique necesse est, ut *reatus* etiam hujus licet adhuc manentis *concupiscentiæ* remittatur; manet *actu*, præterit *reatu*." This is almost identical (allowing for the clearer views of Luther and Melancthon on the subject of justification as a forensic act) with the statement of the Apology for the Augsburg Confession, Art. I. (See Hase's Evangelisch-Protest. Dogmatik, p. 75.) "Lutherus semper ita scripsit, quod baptismus tollat *reatum* peccati originalis, etiamsi *materiale* peccati maneat, videlicet *concupiscentia*. Addidit etiam de materiali, quod Spiritus Sanctus, datus per baptismum, incipit mortificare concupiscentiam." Melancthon, more than once in the Apology, says that Augustine is accustomed to define "peccatum originis concupiscentiam esse."

Dr. Bledsoe, it would seem, has taken a limited statement (and that not understood) in regard to concupiscence in the regenerate; as if it were designed to be universal.

mind or out of it; if all antecedent states, whether of intelligence or emotion, (the only emotions he knows of being passive impressions or sensibilities,) however they may be determined by omnipotence itself, still bear to volitions no other relation than that of conditions and not efficient; then Pelagius' view is the only possible one. There can be no other regeneration than a moral suasion resulting in a contingent and mutable change of choices as to sin and righteousness. And when Dr. Bledsoe is fighting a Calvinist, he is virtually in this position. He denies that there is or can be a necessitated holiness; and by this denial he makes us clearly see he means to deny the possibility of God's propagating in a free agent any such subjective state as would be followed with efficient certainty by any given kind of volitions. He also travesties the Bible doctrine of regeneration (showing again that he does not understand it) as God's directly and necessarily *producing the volitions* of the new born man. Whereas the Bible doctrine is, that God efficiently *produces the holy disposition* which regulates the man's volitions. When he would fain cleanse himself from the slough of Pelagianism, he paints to himself a regeneration which consists in God's efficiently creating in the man new views of truth in the intelligence and new acts of sensibility. But on this monstrosity we have sundry remarks to make. One is, that Dr. Bledsoe declares all the time, these new views and feelings God has produced are but mere passive functions of soul; and again, that volitions are, after all, uncaused by them. Then, of course, such impressions, however far omnipotence might carry them, *would constitute no moral change of the soul*. And we have, after all, no certainty of any new conduct from the new born man. If each volition arises uncaused, contingent, connected by no tie of efficiency with any antecedent state or act of mind, then all the volitions possibly may; so that we might have this monster: a man thoroughly regenerated by Omnipotence, and yet happening to choose to do nothing but sin! Our second remark is, that this scheme of regeneration, if it amounted to anything, would make the converted man a mere machine. It is entirely too necessitarian for us Calvinists! The states which are the necessary antecedent



conditions (not causes, according to Dr. Bledsoe,) of all his regenerate volitions, are mere functions of passivity. So far as those volitions have any connection or character at all, it is with impressions, in which the soul is *merely passive!* Thus, true spontaneity is left out; it is entirely too mechanical for us Calvinists.

But Dr. Bledsoe appeals to his friend *Wiggers*, ("Augustinianism and Pelagianism") (who is himself Pelagian in tendency, who helped him so much in writing his *Theodicy*,) to show what Pelagianism really is. Well, *Wiggers'* showing is pretty just, so far as it goes, but it is incomplete and superficial. It must be borne in mind that this system of error, like every other system of error or truth of human origin, was not fully developed by its inventors. Pelagius and Celestius did not establish all the regular parts and corollaries of their heresy, any more than Copernicus developed all the laws of that planetary system called Copernican. But from the premises which Pelagius gave, the rest grew, in the ulterior discussion, by a logical necessity; and thus *the system* known as Pelagianism came into the history of theology. Every one who thinks connectedly, whether he be friend or enemy of that system, recognises the vital members of the system, as belonging to it. Dr. Bledsoe quotes *Wiggers*, as saying that *the results* of Pelagianism condemned by the General Council of Ephesus, A. D. 431, (Wasn't that the "Robber Council?") were seven. Now, first, we have not been speaking of the results, but of the principles of the system; and second, these were very far from being all the results of Pelagianism debated in the Church. But some of these propositions Dr. Bledsoe says he holds; some he both holds and rejects, as we have seen; and all of them he would hold, if he had the logic and consistency of the early Pelagians. Thus, he assures us he does not think Adam's body would have died, whether he had sinned or not. He would be much more consistent if he did think so; for he thinks that millions of infants die who have no sin original or actual. Why not Adam too?

Nor can we see why Dr. Bledsoe should repudiate the 6th and 7th results of Pelagius: that the law, as well as the gospel, may be



a means of salvation; and that men without the gospel may in some cases practice true godliness, and go to heaven. For upon his theory of free will, why should not these volitions, which are always loose from all efficient control, happen sometimes to be right? And none but a Calvinist can consistently hold it certain that no Jew nor Pagan can serve God because he knows no gospel; for this would make him responsible for volitions which arise with certainty. The only reason then, that Dr. Bledsoe disclaims these "results" is that he does not think consistently.

In dismissing this part of the discussion, we beg the reader especially to note Dr. Bledsoe's positive claim that he holds the Wesleyan theology. This we shall now effectually explode. On pp. 24-25, of his REVIEW he concludes, sustained by the suffrages of a wondrous theologian, in the form of a Presbyterian young lady, that he knows intuitively no one is responsible for his native depravity; and he tells us in the same connection, that it is also an intuitive *datum* of his, that concupiscence is not sinful. "This," he exclaims, with ardor, "is our Methodism . . . . . born with John Wesley in the year of our Lord 1788." Now, Dr. Bledsoe is very right in his chronology, so far as that his doctrine was "born" long since the days of inspiration. But we utterly dispute that it is Methodism; or was born with John Wesley. No. This is his Pelagianism, "born" in the fifth century. Hear David, in the 51st Psalm, *repenting because he was shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin*. Hear Christ say, John iii. 6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Hear Paul, Eph. ii. 3: "We were by nature children of wrath." Is God angry with what is not sinful? Who knows best what is guilty, God, or that wonderful "Presbyterian young lady?" And when we hear Wesley, we find that he has as little to do with the paternity of Dr. Bledsoe's doctrine as the Bible has. Doctrinal Tracts, page 251: "It has already been proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that *hereby* they are children of wrath and liable to eternal damnation." Says Dr. Bledsoe, REV., p. 24: "A *new born infant is not sinful, or deserving of punishment.*" Says Wesley, it is, by reason of its original depravity, "*a child of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation.*"

Wesley, on Original Sin, 1st British Edition, pp. 155, 156 :  
 “Now, *this bias of the will is certainly evil and sinful, and hateful to God*; whether we have contracted it ourselves, or whether we derive it from *Adam*, makes no difference.” . . . .  
 “Therefore the inference, ‘if natural, and (in some sense) necessary, then no sin,’ *does by no means hold.*” (Dr. Bledsoe asserts that if it be natural, and *in any sense necessary*, it is no sin.)  
 Wesley adds: “This doctrine has been held . . . . so far as we can learn, in every Church under heaven, at least from the time that God spake by Moses.” Alas for Dr. Bledsoe, Wesley discards him; says to him: “I never knew you.” Let him now launch some of his scornful invective at the great Founder of Methodism. We wait to hear the thunder. (Many proofs, equally explicit, might be collected from Wesley on Original Sin.)

On p. 27, of his REVIEW, as in the 15th Section of his Examination of Edwards, Dr. Bledsoe asserts in its baldest form, that most characteristic Pelagian principle: that Adam was not *made* holy, but only innocent, which he explains as meaning, neither positively righteous nor sinful; that no moral agent can have such positive initial righteousness; because such a state, if possessed, not being freely chosen by an act of will, would be no moral state at all. He proceeds, p. 27: “Probation is the necessary antecedent to the only means of attaining moral freedom or holiness.” On this heresy, we remark first: Scripture says, Luke i., 35: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee . . . . therefore, also, *that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee*, shall be called the Son of God.” Here was a thing *holy before a probation, born holy*. It was not the eternal Word, for that was not born of Mary; it was the humanity of the Messiah. This simple but terrible antithesis should be enough to open our author's eyes to the depth of his Pelagianism! In fact, his own proposition, as stated by himself, does articulately dispute the possibility of our Redeemer's being by nature a holy free agent. But this is the common faith of all Churches, and the corner-stone of our salvation. We now prove that Dr. Bledsoe's Wesleyan authorities are *as dead against him* as is the Bible, and the Church of all ages. Thus:

When Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, a recognised modern Pelagian, said, exactly according to Dr. Bledsoe's philosophy: "Nature cannot be *morally corrupted*, but by the choice of a moral agent"—Wesley's reply is in these emphatic words: "You may play upon words as long as you please, but still I hold this fast: I, (and you too, whether you will own it or no,) am inclined, and was ever since I can remember, *antecedently to any choice of my own*, to Pride, Revenge, Idolatry." (Isn't Dr. Bledsoe also evidently inclined to the first two?) "If you will not call these *moral corruptions*, call them just what you will. But the fact I am as well assured of as that I have memory or understanding." Original Sin, pp. 193, 194.

Dr. Taylor, in accordance with Dr. Bledsoe's philosophy, had said: "It is absolutely necessary before any creature can be a subject of this," (God's peculiar kingdom,) "that *it learn* to employ and exercise its powers suitably to the nature of them." Says Wesley: "*It is not necessary.*" . . . . . "But it must appear extremely absurd to those who believe God can *create* spirits, both wise and holy: that He can stamp any creature with what measure of holiness He sees good, at the first moment of its existence." . . . . "Just in the same manner you" (Taylor) "go on: 'Our first parents in Paradise were to form their minds to an habitual subjection to the law of God, without which they could not be received into his spiritual kingdom.' This runs upon the same mistaken supposition, that God could not *create them holy*. Certainly *he could, and did.*" Pp. 221, 223. Says Taylor, the Pelagian, like Dr. Bledsoe: "*Righteousness is right action.*" Says Wesley: "Indeed, *it is not*. Here, (as we said before,) is your fundamental mistake. *It is a right state of mind*, which differs from *right action* AS THE CAUSE DOES FROM THE EFFECT. Righteousness is properly and directly a right temper or *disposition of mind*; or a complex of all right tempers." Wesley here, at one trenchant blow, demolishes Dr. Bledsoe's whole philosophy of the will, and teaches, with the Bible and all orthodox Christians of all Churches, that right volitions are not uncaused; but the "effects" "caused" by holy dispositions acting *a priori* to the volitions. P. 286. And says Wesley in conclusion, p. 291: "From

all this it may appear, that the doctrine of *original righteousness* (as well as that of *original sin*) hath a firm foundation in Scripture, as well as in the attributes of a wise, holy, and gracious God."

This express contradiction of Wesley himself, leaves poor Dr. Bledsoe's "Methodism" in a pitiable plight. We have one more Methodist authority, which is, if possible, still more damaging, that of Mr. Richard Watson's *Theolog. Institutes*, Pt. II., Ch. 18, "Fall of Man, Doct. of Orig. Sin." Having stated precisely the doctrine of Dr. Bledsoe and the Pelagians, he proceeds to refute it thus: "If, however, it has been established that God made man 'upright;' that he was created in 'knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness,' and that at his creation he was pronounced '*very good*;' all this" (viz. Dr. Bledsoe's theory of volition) "falls to the ground, and is the vain reasoning of man against the explicit testimony of God. The fallacy is, however, easily detected. It lies in confounding '*habits of holiness*,' with the principle of holiness. Now, though habit is the result of acts, and acts, of voluntary choice; yet, if the choice be a right one—and right it must be in order to an act of holiness—and if this right choice, frequently exerted, produces so many acts as shall form what is called a habit, then either the principle from which that right choice arises, must be good or bad, or neither. If neither, a right choice has no cause at all; if bad, a right choice could not originate from it; if good, then there may be a holy principle in man, a right nature before choice; and so, that part of the argument falls to the ground. Now, in Adam, that rectitude of principle from which a right choice and right acts flowed, was either created with him, or formed by his own volitions. If the latter be affirmed, then he must have willed right before he had a principle of rectitude, which is absurd; if the former, then his creation in a state of moral rectitude with an aptitude and disposition to good, is established." The author then sustains the truth by citing similar arguments from Wesley and President Edwards.

Now this book is one of the text books of the Wesleyan ministry. The words we have quoted from it, which are worthy of being written in gold, give with unanswerable precision, the very argu-

ment we advanced in our REVIEW of October last, pp. 651, 656. The reader is referred to the discussion there, in which we established by the same logic and by unanswerable Scriptures, this doctrine of the Christian Churches. Dr. Bledsoe, in his reply, took good care not to venture near that part of our argument. Let it be also noted how scornfully and utterly Wesley and Watson here cast away his pet theory of the will. The latter states the idea "a right choice has no cause at all," Dr. Bledsoe's very theory, as a self-evident absurdity, which he uses to reduce his opponent to a ruinous dilemma. Both of them teach expressly and by constant implication, that holy dispositions are the efficient cause of right volitions. We have seen Wesley declare that Dr. Taylor's theory about volition, which is Dr. Bledsoe's, is his "*fundamental mistake*." Is Dr. Bledsoe a Wesleyan? or, like Taylor, a Pelagian?

The sophism which underlies this fundamental mistake is so mischievous and has evidently so completely deceived Dr. Bledsoe, that although we explained it briefly in our October No., p. 652, (top,) it is worthy of further illustration. The old sophism is, that a man cannot be responsible for a disposition with which he is endued by nature; because we intuitively judge that *we cannot be responsible for what is involuntary*. The answer is, that in the sense of that intuition, *a man's own native disposition is voluntary with him*. Nobody constrains him to feel it, or yield to it; he feels it of himself; he yields to it of himself. The meaning of the proposition, "a man is not responsible for what is involuntary," as our common sense assents to it, is this: *A man is not responsible for what befalls him AGAINST his own sincere volition*; that is all. Now, will Dr. Bledsoe be rash enough to say that a man's natural disposition actuates him against his own sincere volition? that the naturally envious man, for instance, is actuated by *his own* envious disposition, against his own hearty volition? Hardly. Nature does not act against itself. Dr. Bledsoe seems very strangely to jump to the conclusion, that, because we do not elect beforehand our natural dispositions, therefore we do not have them voluntarily, and ought not to be held responsible about them at all. He cannot see the simple truth, that this native disposi-



tion being *the man's own*, its influence is as really *a function of his spontaneity* as any volition could be, even on Dr. Bledsoe's extreme theory. Now, one simple question will clear away his confusion. May not a man's free preference accept and adopt that which nature gave him, just as much as though he had first elected the quality and procured it for himself? For example, here is a young gentleman who has a very nice brown beard. How does he like it himself? Extremely well; indeed he altogether prefers and admires it and quite prides himself on it. But whence did he get it? Shall we insinuate that it is the work of his own volition? (by the aid of a hair-dye?) Oh no. Nature gave it to him; and that is one essential ground why he is proud of it! So we see how entirely possible it is that *a quality* which one did not *acquire by an act* of choice, may yet be most entirely his *free, spontaneous preference*. Once more. We beg our young gentleman's pardon for supposing, (merely for argument's sake,) that he has the most frightful "carrotty red" beard, and (what is not at all impossible) that he is very foolishly and heartily proud of that same beard. Do not all the young ladies judge him to be therein guilty of "shockingly bad taste?" Of course. Dr. Bledsoe would come to his defence with his Pelagian logic and would argue that, inasmuch as his young gentleman had not voluntarily dyed his beard carrotty red, (but naughty Dame Nature had done it for him,) therefore his perverse liking for it must be involuntary; and so it is no violation of any principle of taste. But none of the young ladies would believe him; their common sense would show them, that this perverse pride in the carrotty red was just as spontaneous and free as though the fop had dyed the fair brown beard red "on purpose." Let the reader apply this parable to man's native moral disposition, and he will see that, although they be native, yet are we as free and responsible in them as though we had first procured them by a volition.

Once more. Dr. Bledsoe is much aggrieved by our saying that the result of his "Theodicy" is, that God admitted sin into his universe, *because he could not help it*. On p. 23d of his REVIEW, he exclaims that to hold such an opinion of God would be virtual atheism. And he urges, p. 24, that the very *gist* of his theory is,



that no one ought to discuss the question "why God *permitted sin*," because, in fact, he does not permit it at all. That this last is a play upon words only, and that he does teach substantially that *God cannot help* men's sinning if they choose, Dr. Bledsoe shall himself prove. He believes that sin is here, and that it is not God's choice it should be here. See Theodicy, pp. 197 and 199. He sees that sin "*will raise* its hideous head; but he does not say, 'So let it be.' No: sin is the thing which God hates, and which *he is determined*, by all the means within the reach of his omnipotence, *utterly* to root out and destroy." It is here. God does not consent to it, but is determined, as far as he can, "*utterly* to root it out." Yet it will *always* be (*i. e.* in hell.) Now, we ask any plain mind: Has not Dr. Bledsoe, in saying these three things, substantially said, that sin enters, because God cannot help it. Again, he says, with much iteration: "Having created a world of moral agents . . . . it was impossible for him to prevent sin," etc., etc. "He could not prevent such a thing." How much difference is there between this, and our "could not help it?" The candid reader will see none. And as to the question, whether it is correct to say God has "permitted sin?" this, even after Dr. Bledsoe has robbed him of his omnipotence, is a mere verbal quibble. When he says we must not speak of God as "permitting" sin, he is merely asserting that the word is always the synonym of *consent to from preference*. Of course God does not consent to sin, out of preference for sin itself; and if that is the only meaning of "permit," then God does not "permit sin." But wise men "permit" many things which they do not prefer. This use of the word is undisputed. And since we do not, like Dr. Bledsoe, rob God of his omnipotence over rational free agents, when we see him, for instance, permitting an archangel (Satan) to sin, and we know that his omnipotence would have enabled him to sustain Satan in holiness, even as it sustains Gabriel; then we are certain that we are right in saying, God *permits* sin, while he does not for its own sake prefer it.

Had Dr. Bledsoe considered a little, he would not have robbed God of his almightiness in the interest of a false speculation. He would have seen these consequences. If God, "having created a

world of moral agents, . . . could not prevent such a thing," then, first, there is no certain encouragement for sinners to pray to God for grace; and second, there is no certainty that God can keep sin out of heaven. Are not angels and saints in heaven free moral agents? If God was "determined, by all the means within the reach of his omnipotence," to root sin out of this world, and *has failed*, may he not also fail to keep it out of the heavenly world? Dr. Bledsoe cannot evade this by any of his expedients. Thus, his work, instead of being "a Theodicy," spreads the pall of despair over the kingdoms both of grace and glory.

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ARTICLE IV.

GODLIKENESS.

In the midst of a sermon, or obituary notice or funeral discourse, preached, written or spoken about a certain defunct statesman, the Rev. Professor Swing, of Chicago, compares the life of the statesman with the life of One whom he calls "God's Earthly Image." Profane history does not reveal much concerning the spiritual life of this statesman, except that he had for his spiritual adviser Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, whose only published theological doctrine is Brahminism, and who has never been called a Trinitarian. And Professor Swing keeps within the same safe limits in his theology, referring at times to the "divineness" of the Redeemer, but never to his divinity.

The object of this quotation is, to introduce the question: "What is meant by God's image?" Mr. Swing evidently uses the title as applicable to the Lord Christ, exclusively, or else uses it as equally applicable to him and to mere men. That there is such a thing as Godliness—or, literally, Godlikeness—is abundantly demonstrable by Scripture proof.

Giving the first place to Revelation, it is clear from the record, that God made man in his own image and likeness. "In the day that God created man, in the image of God created he him;

# THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXVIII.—NO. 4.

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OCTOBER, MDCCCLXXVII.

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ARTICLE I.

DR. BLEDSOE'S PHILOSOPHY OF VOLITION.

PART SECOND.

We now approach the second part of our undertaking—the more articulate discussion of Dr. Bledsoe's special theory of free agency. He charges us with a delinquency in not discussing it formally in our number of October last; where we did not propose nor undertake to do it. We shall now repair that omission; but in a manner which, we surmise, will contribute very little to his contentment. Other inducements to this discussion exist in the fundamental importance of the doctrine of free agency, and in the relation between Dr. Bledsoe's theory of it and all his other theological lucubrations. He seems to suppose that we evaded the task of arguing for our view, under the pretext of such discussions being superfluous for Presbyterian readers; when in fact we knew that his mighty logic (in the Examination of Edwards) had already demolished all the Calvinistic arguments. The reader shall see. The method we propose is, to define carefully our theory of free agency, and then to prove it. We shall then be prepared to entertain Dr. Bledsoe's rival theory, and weigh its contents—if there be any.

First then, the question between us is not whether man is a real free agent, or whether consciousness testifies that we are, or

whether such real free agency is essential to just responsibility. We believe the affirmative of all these as fully as Dr. Bledsoe; and when he represents the debate as between those who hold to a real and conscious free agency and those who dispute it, he misrepresents us. The question is, not whether a real free agency is, but only what it is.

Second. The word "will" has been often used in a broad, and also in a narrow sense. In the broad sense, it is what the Scripture popularly calls "the heart," or what Sir W. Hamilton calls the "conative," or Dr. McCosh the "optative" powers. This is the sense in which Calvinistic writers use the word "will," when they distribute the powers of man's soul into the powers of sensibility (passive,) powers of intellection (simply cognitive,) and "will," or active powers. In this broad sense, the "will" includes much besides the specific power of volition; viz., all those appetitive or "orectic" powers which furnish the emotive element in subjective motives. In the narrow sense, the word "will" means the specific power of choice, or the "volitional" power. This is the sense in which Dr. Bledsoe uses it; and this is the sense in which we shall use it.

Third. The "motive" of volition is a term which is continually used by Dr. Bledsoe, and even by Edwards, with a mischievous ambiguity. It is often employed for the object, that to which the soul moves in volition. And nearly all the confusion in the arguments on the will have arisen from the mistaken notion, that we regard this object, along with its involuntary impression on the sensibility, as the efficient of a volition. Again do we forewarn Dr. Bledsoe and our readers, that these, in our view, are not motive, but only the outward occasion for the action of real motive. What then, according to us, is the efficient motive? The soul's own spontaneous, subjective desire as guided by its own intelligence; and this desire is a function of a faculty distinct from, yea, an opposite to, the sensibility; of an active power, (whereas the sensibility is a "passive power;") of a power wherein the soul is self-moved, instead of being moved from without; wherein the soul is agent, and not mere subject of an effect.

Fourth. If we should say that volitions are "morally necessary," we should mean, with Edwards, only that they arise with *full certainty*, and by the efficiency of their subjective motives. We think, with Dr. Hodge, that the misunderstanding of the word "necessity" does boundless mischief in this debate; but we do not think that this is the fault of the word. The truth is, that since this (Latin) word was domesticated in philosophy, it has undergone a change in its popular use; and even scholars have lost sight of the fact, that its philosophical sense, of full certainty of eventuation, and nothing more, is its proper etymologic meaning. What is its real origin? The "*necessitas*" is simply "*quod non cedit*," the *unfailing*. We can recall the reader's mind from its hallucination, by reminding him of the twin-brother of this word, which has not been abused by modern popular use: "*incessant*." Every school boy knows that "in" is "un," the negative particle. So that "incessant" is *the unceasing*; and so "necessary" (necessant) is *the non-cessing*. But our familiar word, "incessant," has not undergone the bad luck of being perverted to mean (wholly another thing) *the compulsory*. Nobody is so perverse as to think the "incessant talker" is a compulsory talker—a man who is compelled to talk. Well, let the reader only give the great Latin scholastics credit for understanding the real meaning of the word, and this mighty bugbear of "necessity" will vanish. He will then see that it is no dishonest afterthought, no "dodge" to escape the just *odium* of a hateful theory, to say that by a "necessary volition," we mean (and philosophy always did mean) simply what the phrase, an "incessant volition," would classically mean, *volitio quæ, mediante motivo, non cedit*; simply this, that, supposing the subjective motive present, the volition will not fail to rise. Now, "where is the murder?" Why should our innocent Latin word be held responsible for the wholly different idea which popular use has forced upon it: that of inevitable compulsion? But Dr. Bledsoe declares roundly (as in REVIEW p. 34) that he will not be appeased by this definition; that nothing shall satisfy him except our believing that volitions are uncaused and contingent; and that they *may fail to rise* though every condition of their rise be present. Else he thinks the mind is not free.

But, fifth, what is free agency? Let the reader note that we do not say "free will." Dr. Bledsoe himself is constrained, in a sort of grudging way, to grant the reasonableness of Locke's remark, that freedom is an attribute of an agent and not of a faculty; so that, properly speaking, it is the mind which is free, and not the will. So we will not speak of "free will" (at best an ambiguous term,) but of free agency. Dr. Bledsoe is much dissatisfied with Edwards for defining freedom as a man's privilege of doing what he chooses. We will venture the assertion, that Dr. Bledsoe will not find any man of common sense who desires any fuller freedom than this. But the ground of objection against this clear and practical definition is, that the way in which choice comes to pass ought to be determined also; that if a man has the privilege of doing what he chooses, yet he may have been *made to choose* in some way infringing his freedom. And Dr. Bledsoe cites Edwards with great condemnation as saying, that no matter how a man comes to choose thus and thus, if he has unobstructed privilege of acting as he has chosen, he has all the freedom he can ask for. Now we presume that the difference between Dr. Bledsoe and Edwards here is simply this: that the latter was too clear a thinker to have his mind haunted with any phantom of a *choice* which is *compelled*. His common sense taught him that choice, on any theory whatever, must still be an *uncompelled determination* of the soul; so that his practical definition of freedom does include a freedom of the soul, and not of the limbs only, as Dr. Bledsoe cavils. Edwards had in his view, doubtless, that declaration of the Westminster Confession (Chap. ix.,) which frankly says, that freedom is an attribute of the rational agent so inalienable and essential that it cannot be and is not infringed, whatever the moral state of the soul. So, if Dr. Bledsoe could only think that "*any* good can come out of Nazareth," he might see that when we define free agency as a man's liberty of doing as he chooses, we are not laying a wicked trap for him, to catch him in this fraud, viz., that while he has privilege of *doing as he chooses*, we will *compel* him to *choose as he chooses*. No; we cannot conceive of that bugbear of his, a *compelled choice*; we assure him we think



it, just as he does, the intensest of contradictions. And so, in our generous desire to calm his apprehensions (not because it is really necessary,) we tender him this definition of free agency: It is the soul's power of *deciding itself* to action, according to its own subjective nature. (But even this is not going to satisfy him!)

But let it be distinctly understood, that by "ability of will," we understand a very different thing, namely, fallen man's supposed power to reverse that nature by his volition. That power we utterly deny to a born sinner; we do not believe that he can or will choose dispositions exactly against those which it is his nature to prefer, and thus revolutionise that very nature by a volition. Ability we deny, free agency we grant to him.

Sixth. We do not regard President Edwards as infallible, and did not before Dr. Bledsoe assailed him. The essential structure of his argument is indestructible, but it has some excrescences and blemishes. He, like nearly all the English Christian philosophers of his day, was too much under the influence of the pious Locke; and hence his usually clear vision is sometimes confused by the shallow plausibilities of the sensationalist psychology. Hence he sometimes seems to confound objective inducement with subjective motive. He also confuses his reasoning by sometimes using the word "will" in the broad, and sometimes in the narrow sense.

Seventh. The question, How volitions arise in a free agent, has received three distinct answers. One is that of the consistent sensationalist, fatalist, and pantheist. According to these, volition is efficiently caused by emotion; but emotion is only the necessary reflex of impression made on the sensibility from without. We think with Dr. Bledsoe that this scheme is virtually no scheme of free agency at all. Under it the soul is, after all, determined to action by an efficient external to itself; the soul is really not agent, but acted on.

The second answer is in the opposite extreme: it stakes our true free agency in this, that the volition may always be a mental modification arising immediately in the mind without any efficient at all: a self-determined change. The advocates of this scheme

hold that the free volition must be disconnected even from subjective motive, and arise, in that sense, absolutely uncaused. Its advocates describe it sometimes as the theory of the self-determination of the will, (as opposed to the self-determination of the soul,) using the "will" in its narrow sense. Sometimes they say, the mind must be in absolute *equilibrium*, as to even subjective motive, when the free volition takes place. Sometimes they say, volition is an *uncaused event*. But always they concur in holding that the free volition must be a *contingent event*, whatever may be the antecedent states of mental conviction and desire looking towards the object of choice.

The third answer shuns both these extremes, and defines free agency as the self-determination of the soul (not of the specific faculty of choice). But it holds that rational spirit, like every other power in nature, conforms to the maxim, "Order is heaven's first law." In other words, it acts, like everything else in divine providence, in accordance with a regulative law. And this law of free volitions is the soul's own rational and appetitive nature—its *habitus*. Hence the rational free volition is not an "uncaused phenomenon" in the world of mind; it only arises by reason of its regular efficient, which is the subjective motive. By subjective motive is meant that complex of mental judgment as to the preferable, and subjective appetency for the object which arises together in the mind (on presentation of the object,) according to the regulative law of the mind's own native disposition. In a word, the free volition will rise according to, and because of, the soul's own strongest motive; and that is the reason why it is a rational, a free, and a responsible volition. Hence, we believe that such volitions are attended with full certainty, (which is what we mean by moral necessity,) and also with full freedom. (We are fully aware that every man performs acts whose causation in the soul is more secondary. Thus, the snuff-taker opens his box and "takes his pinch," often, perhaps, without any remembered consciousness of the subjective motive. It is because both mind and limbs have come, by repetition, so under the influence of the law of habit—*consuetudo*, not *habitus*. This law is so influential in this case that we popularly term the acts "mechani-

cal." Are such acts still rational, free, and responsible? They are, so far as previous acts of conscious freedom formed the *consuetudo* which now influences the mind and body.)

Now the third is the theory of the will, or of the way responsible volitions rise, held by Calvinists. Does not its right statement evince of itself its correctness to every candid mind?

1. Our first argument for it then shall be, that it is supported by men's consciousness. Dr. Bledsoe thinks not. He is, indeed, too adroit to say that we are conscious of having rational responsible volition *without motives*; for he foresees the reply, that consciousness can only be of what is in the mind. He admits (Examination of Edwards, p. 230): "We are not conscious that there is no producing cause of volition. No man can be conscious of that which does not exist." His position (p. 227) is that "we find our minds in a state of acting. *This is all* we discover by the light of consciousness." But is this all? We raise the question of fact. We assert that whenever the soul chooses with sufficient deliberation, we are conscious of choosing according to a subjective motive. Dr. Bledsoe is misled in the reading of consciousness by haste, pride of hypothesis, and the evanescent nature of the impression left on remembered consciousness by the motive when the mind hurries on to the execution and fruition of its choice. This cause of an erroneous reading of consciousness may be well explained by the manner in which we instantaneously drop out of remembered consciousness the *objects* also of rapid volitions. The intelligible perception of the object is, as Dr. Bledsoe admits, the absolutely essential condition (not cause) of the act of will. Yet often its presence is not consciously remembered for a moment. Here is a man fencing. We see him intentionally bring up his sword and make the "guard in tierce." He saw his adversary make, perhaps with almost lightning speed, the "thrust in tierce." That occasioned his making the guard in the same figure (the subjective motive being of course the desire, according to his nature, to preserve his own body.) Does he remember, an instant after, in which figure his adversary made his thrust? Perhaps not. But Dr. Bledsoe admits that his perception, at the time of the "thrust in tierce," was

the occasion without which he would not have made the "guard in tierce," which he did intentionally make. What is the solution? That in the speed of the mental processes the conscious perception of the thrust dropped instantaneously out of remembered consciousness. There is no other. Now, Dr. Bledsoe will ask that fencer: Do you remember being rationally conscious of the desire of self-preservation as your subjective motive for making that rapid guard? And very possibly the fencer will answer: No. The solution which Dr. Bledsoe has just used applies again. Haste and excitement caused the *motive*, as the *occasion*, to drop out of remembered consciousness. But the intelligent volition to "guard in tierce" could no more have arisen in that fencer's mind without motive than without object. Let us then eliminate the cause of confusion, and inspect any volition which is sufficiently deliberate; we know we are conscious that motive prompts it. Had the motive not been, the volition would not have been. This is but saying that a reasonable man knows that when he acts deliberately he thinks he has his own "reason for acting." When he sees one act, and asking, "Why did you do that?" receives the answer, "Oh, for nothing at all;" he sets down the answer as silly. It is the very characteristic of a fool to act "without knowing what for." Is this the description Dr. Bledsoe means to give of himself when he declares (p. 227) that he "sees not the effectual power of any cause operating to produce his volitions?" Did he write all these wise books and reviews without "effectually" or decisively "knowing what for?" Courtesy requires us to leave him to make the answer. For ourselves we can only say, that when we get to that pass—that we deliberately choose a line of action without even thinking we have in ourselves a rational motive (an *aiṛia*) determinative of our choice—we hope our friends will select a lunatic asylum for us.

2. If the most deliberate acts of choice may be thus loose from the efficiency of all antecedents in the mind, then we could not make a recognition of any permanent character in ourselves or our fellow-men. What do we mean by *a character*? Clearly a something having continuity and permanency qualifying the free spirit. (Any man of common sense will add, "a character is a certain

set of practical principles permanently qualifying the man." But we need not claim more than the general answer.) Now one man does not have the gift of "discerning another man's spirit" by immediate intuition; he learns character *a posteriori* by observing his fellow-man's volitions. But, if Dr. Bledsoe's theory were true, volitions would be no *indices* of character, for they must be loose from the efficiency of "all antecedents in or out of the mind;" and of course loose from the regulative power of that permanent something in the mind constituting its character. But we ask, emphatically, May not character be at least sometimes known by conduct? If not, how does a jury ever find out whom to punish? How does Dr. Bledsoe find out whom to esteem?

Dr. Bledsoe (in Section XV., Examination of Edwards) makes a set effort to escape this fatal logic. The place abounds with the baldest assertions of the fundamental Pelagian postulate, that a concreated righteousness of principle would be no righteousness, because not the result of an act of choice; and that hence no moral agent can be made righteous, but he must do a righteousness. President Edwards had argued (Treatise on Original Sin) in exact conformity with the Wesleyan Watson, and with Wesley himself: "Not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; so that the act of choosing what is good, is no further virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle or virtuous disposition of the mind."

Dr. Bledsoe conceives that the fallacy of this argument proceeds from the ambiguity of the term principle. Taking, *e. g.*, the instance of Adam's first eating the forbidden fruit, he claims that the "principle" from which this evil volition resulted, was not any "implanted principle" at all, but Adam's "intention, or design, or motive." The only "implanted principle" Dr. Bledsoe sees in the case is, that native desire for material good and for knowledge which Adam's Creator had placed in the animal and spiritual parts of the creature's person. If God put them there, he urges, they could not have been sinful; they must have been innocent. Says he: "And hence, we very clearly perceive that



a sinful action may result from those principles of our constitution which are in themselves neither virtuous nor vicious." And again: "In fact, the virtuous principle from which the virtuous act is supposed to derive its character, is not an implanted principle at all, but the design, or intention, or motive, with which the act is done, and of which the created agent is himself the author."

Now, on this evasion we remark, first: he misrepresents us in saying we teach there must have been an "implanted principle" of evil from which Adam's first sin must proceed. No. We say there must have been a principle of evil prior in the order of causation to the act, or else the act would not have been qualified as evil. And this Dr. Bledsoe is compelled to own, p. 201: "As it is truly said, . . . a holy action can proceed only from a holy principle or disposition," etc. Second: we ask the reader to note how unavoidably Dr. Bledsoe falls into the true doctrine: "holy action *proceeds* from;" "a sinful action may *result* from," etc. Surely that which "proceeds" and "results from" antecedents, is an effect. Common sense will assert its rights. Third: Dr. Bledsoe thinks that the "agent is himself the author" of "the design, or intention, or motive," which is "the principle from which the virtuous act is supposed to derive its character." Very well. He has taught us that all functions of intelligence, and all functions of emotion or feeling, are passivities; the will is the only active power. Now, then, if the agent is author himself of the principle of his volition, he must have originated that principle by an act of choice! What principle of "design, intention, or motive," regulated that prior act of choice? And must he not have chosen to choose? Thus Dr. Bledsoe is hopelessly entangled in the endless *regressus* and in Mr. Watson's fatal refutation at once.

But fourth, and chiefly: let us look a little more narrowly at this self-originated "design, or intention, or motive" in Adam, from which Dr. Bledsoe admits his unholy action proceeded. What was this intention? Merely to gain knowledge, and please his palate naturally and innocently? That was not all; for as Dr. Bledsoe justly argues, the appetency for these natural goods being implanted by his Maker, were not essentially sinful, but

legitimate in their proper bounds. There was an intention to gratify these unrighteously. There was intelligent intention to prefer these natural goods to duty. Now let this "intention" be inspected. Who fails to see that it involves a subjective appetency? A desire; the new expression of a new and perverted disposition; the *habitus*, namely, of unrighteous self-will. While we know very well that this new disposition, qualifying Adam's soul now, was *in time* synchronous with the evil act, we also know that in the order of production it was precedent to it, and so qualified it as evil. Thus Dr. Bledsoe's pretended analysis is only an attempt to wrap up the great facts of the precedent disposition and appetency under the word "intention." But, we repeat, intention involves them. "*Intentio*" is a subjective and active directing of the soul upon (*tendere in*) an objective end. This is the analysis of common sense. Every lawyer and jurymen thinks that in proving "evil intention" on the murderer, he has proved "malice."

Dr. Bledsoe thinks that if Edwards argues that Adam's first holy volition would never have taken place, unless God implanted a principle of holiness to prompt it, he is equally bound to argue that the first sin could never have occurred unless the Maker first implanted an evil principle to prompt it. Our author forgets, in this ingenious cavil, that there is an important contrast in the essence of holiness and sin. Sin in principles and acts, is a *privative* quality. Holiness is a *positive* one. Ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ ἀνομία. Discrepancy from law is sin. But only positive conformity with the standard is holiness. Now surely it is one thing to say that a finite, dependent creature cannot, if created in a state of defect, out of that defect originate the positive, and a very different one to say that this finite, mutable creature, naturally endued with the positive, may admit the negative defect. Dr. Bledsoe's logic is precisely this: because a candle sixteen inches long will never shine unless it be positively lighted, *ergo*, it will never cease shining unless it be positively extinguished. That might follow as to an infinite candle; but this one, being but a few inches long, has only to be completely let alone, to burn itself out.

3. If our theory were not true, no certainty would attend any

form of influence which man exerts upon man. Education would yield no definite results in the formation of character. Human control over a fellow-man beyond the material grasp of the controlling person, could never be exerted with full certainty; for the way in which human control exerts itself, is by addressing some inducement to some known subjective appetency of the person governed, which is known to be adequate to occasion the designed action. For instance, may not the employer present to his servant's native desire for gain a pecuniary reward, which will certainly result in the performance of the service? Does not the teacher present to the urchin's desire of bodily welfare, a positive threat of the birch, modifying that native appetency into active fear, which will result in punctual and unflinching obedience? Dr. Bledsoe knows that this is often done. He has friends, from whom, unless death or casualty intervene, he knows his requests will secure an infallible compliance, in at least some things. *How* does he know this? If volitions are efficiently caused by "no antecedent in or out of the mind," he has no right to think it—no means to know it. His doctrine is, that every antecedent condition of choice may be there, looking to the confidently expected volition, and yet there is always the possibility that the will may fly off at a tangent, as men popularly say, into the opposite determination. He has no right to be *entirely certain* that the best friend he has in the world is going to comply with his most reasonable request, though able to do so.

4. The free volition which should arise exactly according to this theory, would be neither rational nor moral. The very ground of our judging these qualities to an act is, that we recognise it as proceeding out of a rational or a moral motive, which was efficient thereof. Dr. Bledsoe is so unable to blind his eyes to this fact, that he says, while the rational or moral volition has *no cause*, it has *its ground* in reason, of course. But what is *the ground* of an act? The phrase is a metaphor. The ground of a thing is that on which it stands, as a house on its foundation. The ground of a volition is the state of soul on which it stands for its being. What is this but *its cause*? The ground of an act which yet is not its cause, would be a ground that was not a

ground. How can a volition derive positive or certain moral character from its rational or moral "ground" in the mind, unless the volition is positively and certainly connected therewith? Let common sense answer. We see a man perform an act, in outward form charitable. We ask, "What made you do that?" He answers, "Nothing; the volition *just came so.*" Instantly we withdraw our moral approbation. The man, instead of appearing approvable, now seems only silly.

5. Dr. Bledsoe's scheme breaks down utterly when brought to the test of man's free choice concerning his *summum bonum*. Let natural good and evil be presented in alternative before the free soul; as, for instance, sickness and health. Let him be free to choose between them simply for their own sakes, without any complication of the question by connected consequences or moral restrictions. Let him be invited to exercise his freedom by electing sickness rather than health, simply for the sake of being sick. Is there a particle of uncertainty? Is there the faintest possibility that he will so elect? Yet is that man's election just as free and rational, though morally necessitated or made certain by the efficient influence of his own common sense and natural desire of welfare as any other volition he ever performs.

6. Every rational being in the universe, except man, is an instance exactly against Dr. Bledsoe's theory of free agency. God's holy volitions are morally necessitated by his eternal and immutable perfections. Is he therefore not free? The Bible itself tells us that "he cannot lie," "he cannot be tempted to evil." Then, according to this philosophy of contingent volitions, none of God's moral volitions are free! Our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have seen, *was born* a "holy thing." According to Dr. Bledsoe, he was therefore not a free agent. Holy angels, as we are expressly taught by Scripture, had holiness as "their first estate," and they are now made known to us as "elect angels." Now Dr. Bledsoe himself says he believes in the infallible "perseverance of the elect." So it appears these angels must be certainly determined to holy volitions, and therefore they are not free agents; and if they are not free agents, they cannot

have moral character: so the holy angels cannot be holy, because they are indefectibly holy! Again, according to Dr. Bledsoe, elect sinners will infallibly persevere in so many at least of the acts of holy volition as will maintain their spiritual union with their Redeemer; for Dr. Bledsoe believes in the "perseverance of the elect" (though not in the "perseverance of the saints"). Now there are some "mighty curious" corollaries attached to this doctrine of the "perseverance of the elect." God's decree of their election to glory is conditioned on his foresight that they will not only believe on Christ, but continue in faith to the end. But if the creature's volitions are contingent, God's prescience of them must be contingent, since he knows them just as they are to be. Here, then, we have a perseverance grounded on the fact that they will persevere, and a perseverance which is but contingent, *i. e.*, a perseverance that may not persevere! But our main point is to argue that as to those persevering elect, at least those volitions by which they cleave to Christ must be certain. But Dr. Bledsoe's theory teaches that if they are certain, they are not free. Once more: lost souls and evil angels are infallibly certain never to will holy volitions. Then, their unholy ones are not free, and therefore not blameworthy!

We quote, under this head, from Wesley on Original Sin, pp. 286-7, in order that Dr. Bledsoe may see how much title he has to call himself a Wesleyan. Dr. Taylor of Norwich had advanced (precisely Dr. Bledsoe's doctrine on p. 28 of his Review) the proposition that a being "must exist, and must use his intellectual powers *before* he can be *righteous*." Wesley, adopting Dr. Jennings's reply, answers precisely according to our argument in this 6th head:

"But according to this reasoning, *Christ could not be righteous at his birth*. You answer, 'He existed before he was made flesh.' I reply, He did, *as God*. But the man Christ Jesus did not. . . . According to your reasoning, then, the man Christ Jesus *could not be righteous at his birth*."

"Nay, according to this reasoning, God could not be righteous from eternity, because he must exist before he was righteous. You answer, 'My reasoning would hold even with respect to God, were it true that he ever did begin to exist; but neither the existence nor the holiness of God was prior to each other.' Nay, but if his existence was not prior to



his holiness—if he did not exist before he was holy—your assertion that ‘every being must exist before it is righteous,’ is not true.”

7. The Bible doctrines of God's certain foreknowledge of men's volitions, of his foreordination of them (see Acts ii. 23; Isaiah x. 5–7) of his prediction of their voluntary acts, and of his providence over such acts, present an unanswerable demonstration of our theory of volition. We shall not fatigue Christian readers by citing many Scriptures to prove either of these doctrines. God's providence is “his most holy, wise, and powerful sustaining and governing all his creatures and all their actions.” That his efficacious providence extends, in some mysterious way, to men's volitions, is expressly asserted in the Bible. “The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.” Prov. xxi. 1; 2 Sam. xvi. 11; xxiv. 11, etc. Is God's providence here efficacious? If one answers, “No,” he contradicts the Scripture, and robs God of his sovereignty. If he answers “Yes,” as he must, the question is settled; for in causing this volition certainly to arise in the man's soul, God has procured the operation of some sort of causation. The argument is so true, that it is hard to express it without uttering a truism. But then that volition (which still is free and responsible) was not uncaused. Now the species of causation which we assign for it, subjective motive, is beyond question more consistent with the man's free agency, than any other possible species. Let Dr. Bledsoe try his hand at explaining how there can be any other possible species of efficient causation of that volition in that man's soul, more compatible with his free agency therein, than subjective motive acting spontaneously, yet according to the known law of his disposition. But we need not press him so far. The argument is in these simple and inevitable propositions: God efficiently controls the man's volition; therefore the volition had some efficient. But the essence of Dr. Bledsoe's theory is, that volition has no other *efficient* antecedent, either in or out of the mind, than the mind itself.

Again: God has predicted a multitude of volitions to be formed in subsequent times by free agents. He has foretold them positively. He has, so to speak, made the credit of his veracity

responsible for their certain future occurrence. Here we have two arguments. These predictions imply a certain foreknowledge in God; and from this foreknowledge we argue the certainty of the events foreknown. Again: inasmuch as God is well acquainted with the feebleness and fickleness of man, and the uncertainty of human affairs in themselves, unless, when he predicted that a certain man should freely do a certain act, he purposed effectually to bring the doing of it to pass, he could not safely or wisely have committed himself to the prediction. Would Dr. Bledsoe, knowing that the cashier of his publishing house was both poor, fickle, foolish, mortal, and of uncertain moral principle, like to pledge his credit that this cashier shall, on the first day of June, 1885, infallibly pay a given paper merchant five thousand dollars, unless he felt, while giving the pledge, that he himself possessed some effectual mode of causing the cashier to do it? God, in the Bible, pledged his credit to many such things.

But God's universal and infallible foreknowledge is sufficient to prove our doctrine. Dr. Bledsoe cites Edwards as presenting this argument in this comprehensive form: "When the existence of a thing is infallibly and indissolubly connected with something else which has already had existence, then its existence is necessary; but the future volitions of moral agents are infallibly and indissolubly connected with the foreknowledge of God, and therefore they are necessary." This is so conclusive that Dr. Bledsoe admits frequently that God's prescience proves *the certainty* of free volitions. Thus, p. 141: "It is freely conceded that whatever God foreknows will most certainly and infallibly come to pass." Watson, in his Institutes, (Part II. Chap. IV.) admits that God's prescience refutes the idea of any *uncertainty* in the volitions foreseen. He says that when he teaches the "contingency" of volitions, he does not mean their uncertainty, but their freedom. "Contingency is not opposed to *certainty*, but to *necessity*." He then proceeds to define the species of necessity which he denies of free volitions, in the following unmistakable terms: "The very nature of this controversy fixes this as the precise meaning of the term. The question is not, in point of fact, about

the *certainty* of moral action, that is, whether they will happen or not; but about the nature of them, *whether free or constrained,*" etc. It thus appears that the necessity against which Watson protests, is the necessity of *constraint*. Abating the novel and unusual definition of the word *contingency*, Watson's statement is one which every Calvinist can accept. But Dr. Bledsoe certainly cannot adopt that view of "certainty" in volitions, which the leading Wesleyan authority here gives us.

The argument from God's prescience to our theory of volition, was stated by us (REVIEW, October, 1876,) in a form to bring out articulately a link which Edwards leaves to be implied. That which is by an infallible mind certainly foreseen, must be certain to occur. Nothing would be certain to occur in the sphere of dependent being, unless there were some efficient of its certainty. Does anything come absolutely *ex nihilo*? Even Dr. Bledsoe concedes that it does not. Well, then, when a thing is certainly to come, it is equally clear that the something out of which it comes must be such a something as will not fail to produce it. For if it may fail to produce it, then the thing is not certain to come. This is the idea of efficient causation: a producing agency which will not fail. Now, then, unless the event be certain to arise, no correct mind will have a certain belief it will arise. If any mind correctly and certainly expect it to arise, it must be because there is seen some efficient cause to make it arise. For since nonentity cannot produce, an event that did not have *some* certainly efficient cause would not be certain to occur. Every gambler knows that the dice which always fall six up, are loaded. But where will you find that certain efficient of the free, foreseen volition? Our theory presents the answer most consistent with free agency; for if you place the causation anywhere save in the efficient influence of subjective motive, under the regulative control of the soul's own disposition, free agency is lost.

Such is the point of this unanswerable argument. Dr. Bledsoe is hugely offended because we intimated that he misunderstood or evaded its point. If the reader will examine the 11th Section of the Examination of Edwards, he will see the mode in which our author proposes to resolve it. He tells us in the outset, that

“to many minds, even among distinguished philosophers, the prescience of Deity and the free agency of man have appeared to be irreconcilable.” Among these are Dugald Stuart, Dr. Campbell, and Locke. Yet Dr. Bledsoe believes that he can easily remove the argument which convinced them! How does the reader suppose this exploit is wrought? By begging the very question in debate, whether volition is an event without efficient cause; and by deciding, in opposition to the intuitive judgment of all other philosophers and common men, that in the mental world changes may and do arise without efficient cause. He would have us draw a distinction between “logical certainty” and a “causal certainty.” He admits that God’s certain foreknowledge of a volition must imply its “logical certainty;” but he denies that we are entitled to infer therefrom its “causal certainty.” Let him express his idea in another form (p. 135): “But is this indissoluble connexion” (of the occurrence of volition with God’s certain foresight thereof) “at all inconsistent with the contingency of the event known? *This is the question.*” . . . To settle this question, . . . “let us suppose, to adopt the language of President Edwards, ‘that nonentity is about to bring forth,’ and that an event comes into being without any cause of its existence. This event then exists; it is seen, and it is known to exist. Now, even on this wild supposition, there is an infallible and indissoluble connexion between the existence of the event and the knowledge of it; and hence it is necessary, in the sense above explained. But what has this necessary connexion to do with the cause of its existence?” By supposing such a case, Dr. Bledsoe endeavors to show that the “logical certainty,” which he concedes, does not imply a “causal certainty,” which he denies. But the reply is very simple: Such a case cannot be supposed. That “nonentity can bring forth,” is a proposition which the reason rejects as a self-evident impossibility. Does not he himself admit that it is a “wild supposition?” If it might be assumed, then we might admit that a “logical certainty” does not imply a “causal certainty.” But it may not be assumed. On the contrary, we assert that, because the reason tells us by its most fundamental intuition that every event must have a cause,

the "causal certainty" does and must follow from the logical certainty. If we are certain a given event is going to happen at a given time, then we are intuitively certain that the efficient cause of that event is going to be present at that time. Our reason tells us that otherwise the event would not be. What is this but the intuitive judgment on which all valid inductive science proceeds? Unsettle this connexion between the logical and the causal certainty, and a *posteriori* argument is at an end. The very *organon* for ascertaining natural laws is broken up; the foundation of the reason is uprooted. Dr. Bledsoe exclaims, that then we bring the law of causation to complete the argument from God's prescience to the efficient influence of motive. Of course we do. His complaint betrays the very fact, whose intimation he so resented. Of course the intuition that no change comes uncaused, is an implied premise of Edwards's enthymeme. He did not expand it in that place, because he did not imagine that any one would argue from the opposite and impossible supposition that nonentity can bring forth events.

It is wholly unnecessary to follow Dr. Bledsoe through all the confusions of his attempted evasion from the grasp of our argument. In one place, for instance, he endeavors to insinuate—what he dares not assert plainly—that the intuition which demands a cause for every event is not binding in this argument, by bringing in the assertion of Stewart, that the deductions of geometry are not founded on its axioms, but on its definitions. We might pause to ask whether it is creditable to one who has written on the philosophy of mathematics, to be misled by this very one-sided statement. He should long ago have found its solution in the obvious view that while the properties of figures and bodies (described in the definitions of geometry) are of course the subject matter of geometrical reasonings—the things geometers reason about—still the axioms, or primitive judgments of the reason about quantity, are the logical foundations of all the reasonings about properties. But why intrude that old, quibbling debate? Could geometrical reasoning proceed without any axiomatic truths? Can philosophy proceed without the fundamental axiom of cause? After all, Dr. Bledsoe does not dare to



say it can. Even in the construction of his sophism, he admits that it would be a "wild supposition." The outrage done to reason by this attempt to sunder a "causal" from a "logical" certainty is so great, that Dr. Bledsoe's own mind recalcitrates, and constrains him to a fatal concession. (Examination of Edwards, p. 146.) "If Edwards means that a thing cannot be foreknown unless it has a sufficient ground and reason for its existence, and does not of itself come forth out of nothing, we are not at all concerned to deny his position." Now, why should Dr. Bledsoe deceive himself by calling the efficient cause of volition a sufficient "ground and reason"? Is volition only a logical inference? He of all men is compelled to deny that proposition. We properly speak of a "sufficient ground and reason" for logical conclusion. Why, then, seek to hide under this nomenclature of logic, what is nothing else but *efficient motive* of the act of soul? The only sufficient ground and reason, in whose certain action God sees the certainty of the volition, is the *subjective motive* which, he sees, *determines* that volition. It is true, Dr. Bledsoe proceeds to speak, as he so often does, of volition as "proceeding from the mind, acting in view of motives." First, we remark on this subterfuge: here is the old and obstinate confusion of objective inducement with true, subjective motive; our author still is under the hallucination that "motive" is *something objective, at which* the mind is looking. But, second, has not Dr. Bledsoe said many times that "motive" (whatever it may be) is only the occasion and not the cause of the mental determination? The question then arises, since the objective *at which* the mind looks, does not efficiently dispose or influence the mind to choice, *what does?* Does the mind determine itself to choice? Dr. Bledsoe gives up that solution, as contradictory. (See his 16th Section, Examination of Edwards.) Then what does? Does "nonentity bring forth"? And here we commend to Dr. Bledsoe's lips one of the few valid specimens of his own philosophising. He teaches us, very correctly, that it is not the *agent* which is the cause of effects, but it is his action which causes it. The being or existence of a given agent is not what is fruitful of effects; it may exist for ages, (as the arsenic has existed in the

mineral ore ever since the creation, and caused the death of no animal.) without generating a given effect. It is when it acts, that it produces effects. While we loosely speak of the agent as cause, yet, in strictness of speech, it is *the agent's appropriate action* which is real cause of the resultant change. This is excellent doctrine, and according to it, Dr. Bledsoe contradicts himself, when he speaks of the mind as causing or producing volitions, and yet denies that any antecedent action in the mind produces it.

Dr. Bledsoe virtually concedes that, to the human reason, at least, a logical certainty must imply a causal certainty, by the subterfuge to which he is at last driven, on his 147th page. It is in substance this: that although our minds are so constituted that it would be absurdity and contradiction in us to think a thing certain to occur, without thinking there will be any certain thing anywhere to make it occur; yet it may not be so with God's mind; and it is very presumptuous in us to assume it. That is to say, although God assures us that our spirits are formed in his image and likeness; although we are assured that every constitutive feature of the human reason which is a mental excellence, also exists in God's mind in the higher grade of an infinite rational perfection; although God enjoins us by the very intuitions which he has implanted as our regulative laws of thought, not to think that an event will be certain to arise without any cause certainly efficient of its rise; yet it is presumptuous in Calvinists to say that God certainly will not perpetrate the mental solecism which he has made impossible for us, formed in his image! Dr. Bledsoe thinks that somehow God's infinitude may make such a difference between his thought and ours, that a species of thinking which would be preposterous in us, may be legitimate for him. This is substantially the solution which Archbishop King gives, to escape the stress of our argument from God's foreknowledge. If the reader would see a calm and masterly refutation of Dr. Bledsoe and Archbishop King on this point, let him consult again the Wesleyan text book, Watson's *Theological Institutes*, Part II., Chap. IV. He there shows that the position is "dangerous," "monstrous," and in premises

"anti-scriptural." He asserts that the fact God is incomprehensible, does not prevent our knowing him truly and correctly, up to the limits of our finite knowledge. He teaches that his prescience differs from ours, not in kind, but in degree. He declares that if God's attributes, both rational and moral, are not really like the scriptural, human conceptions of them, but mere analogues, then the foundation of religion is gone. Is Dr. Bledsoe a Wesleyan?

Again, we beg the reader to fix the true question before his mind. The question is not, whether God has modes of cognition inconceivably above ours. Doubtless he has. The question is, whether God has modes of cognition contradictory to those which he has himself made not only valid but imperative for us, created in his image. If one of us were to convince himself that an event is certainly coming, and yet that there is nothing anywhere certainly efficient of its coming, we should outrage our reason. Does God *commit that very outrage* in the higher use of his reason? We answer, No! And we say, No, not because his doing so would be incomprehensible, but because it would be contradictory. Dr. Bledsoe shall here define this difference. P. 221: "There is some difference, I have supposed, between disbelieving a thing because we cannot see how it is, and disbelieving it because we very clearly see that it cannot be any how at all." This is well said. Because we see that, according to that law of cause, which God has impressed both on nature and reason, the thing that is certain to happen must have, somewhere, an efficient which will certainly make it happen; and inasmuch as the efficiency of subjective motive over volition is the only explanation thereof, consistent with free agency; therefore, we know that when God foreknows volitions certainly, our theory of motives producing volitions is true.

Dr. Bledsoe takes an attitude of humility, in order to escape this argument. He falls back on his ignorance. He chides us for assuming, as he charges, that God has no way of knowing certainly the contingent volition; because we cannot explain it. But let not the reader be deceived. Dr. Bledsoe thinks that he can explain it none the less; and this by the Molinist scheme of

*scientia media*, which, he tells us, he adopted with all his heart, when he became acquainted with it. Church History tells us that Rome has never had the audacity to adopt it, in the teeth of the Scriptures, the Fathers, and Philosophy. But Dr. Bledsoe is a bold man. In his Review, pp. 47-51, we have his attempt to escape our exposure of Molinism; an attempt made up of confusions and misstatements, in which he so loses himself as to ascribe to us precisely what we were confuting. We will not weary the reader by unwinding all these tortuous and entangled threads. It will be shorter to restate the problem.

In the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Pelagian theory of volition, which was substantially Dr. Bledsoe's, found itself crushed by this argument from God's certain prescience. To escape this refutation, Louis Molina, a Spanish Jesuit, devised his theory of mediate foreknowledge, which he introduced to the learned world, A. D. 1588, in his book entitled *Liberi Arbitrii Concordia cum Gratiae Donis*. Dr. Murdock, on Mosheim, Vol. III., p. 111, states his doctrine thus: "What depends on the voluntary action of his creatures, that is, future *contingencies*, God knows only *mediately*, by knowing all the circumstances in which these free agents will be placed, what motives will be present to their minds, and thus foreseeing and knowing how they will act."

Those orders of the Romish clergy who followed Augustine, resisted this doctrine with all their might. The controversy was ardent, because the Jesuits, according to their usual policy, defended their member with a strict partisan zeal. The question was referred to Rome, where a special commission of theologians was raised to examine it, called the *Congregatio de Auxiliis (Gratiae)*. Mosheim, who made no secrets of his leanings to Arminianism, says (Vol. III., p. 327) that after long debates, this commission actually reached a decision, which was reported to the Pope for his sanction and publication. The substance of this was, that this "opinion of Molina approximated to those of the Pelagians, which had been condemned" by the Roman Church. (We have, then, the suffrages of Rome herself, in addition to early history, in support of our assertion that Dr. Bledsoe is a

virtual Pelagian, for he says that he heartily adopts the doctrine.) But the usual crooked and time-serving policy of the Popes, and their fear of the growing ascendancy of the Jesuit order, prevented the publication of this decision.

Dr. Bledsoe and we both agree, that since God's cognitions are perfect, eternal, coëtaneous, and unchangeable, none of them can have arisen deductively, after the method of our inferential and "discursive" processes of logic. All must be primary and intuitive. The theologians mean this: that it cannot be that God, like us, first knew premises, and then *afterwards*, by a process of derivation and a *succession* of thought, learned from them conclusions not before known to the divine mind. For this is inconsistent with the eternity and completeness of the divine omniscience. But no theologian means to deny that this immediate intuition of God takes in truths according to their actual relations. Doubtless, since his knowledge is absolutely correct, it takes truths exactly as they are; but many truths are truths of relation. These, therefore, the divine mind, while it takes them up intuitively, takes as related truths. For instance, in the history of the material world, God had no occasion to learn the power of a given cause, *a posteriori*, from its effect, as we do, since he eternally and immediately knew both cause and effect. But he doubtless always foresaw that cause and its effect as thus related, because in fact they were thus related; and his intuition is always true to fact, being absolutely correct. Nor will the considerate mind have a particle of difficulty in admitting that there may be immediate intuition of a truth of relation. Are not several of our own primitive judgments of this kind? What else is this? "If two magnitudes are respectively equal to a third, they must be equal to each other."

With this obvious explanation, we make our first remark against this ascription to God of a *scientia media*. However Dr. Bledsoe may have modified the theory for himself in his last Review, under the stress of our criticism, it was, in the hands of its inventors, an ascription to God of an inferential knowledge. If it is not such in Dr. Bledsoe's hands now, he is evidently improving somewhat in his theology; our tuition is doing him some



good!) Why did its own inventors name it *scientia media*, mediate foreknowledge, except because they thought its conclusions were mediated to the divine mind by premises? And do they not state expressly what those premises, as they suppose, are? "the circumstances in which these free agents will be placed, and what motives will be present to their minds." What else did the inventors mean, by placing this species of cognition between God's *scientia simplex*, or knowledge of the infinite possible, and his *scientia visionis*, or knowledge of all the uncontingent actual? Surely these include all possible forms of the divine intuition. The intermediate class they thought, therefore, to be a class of inferential cognitions. So, certainly, judges Dr. Hodge—Theology, Vol. I., p. 400: "The kind of knowledge this theory supposes cannot belong to God, because it is inferential. It is deduced from a consideration of second causes and their influence, and therefore is inconsistent with the perfections of God, whose knowledge is not discursive, but independent and intuitive." This makes our first objection against *scientia media* sufficiently clear.

Our second is an argument *ad hominem*; but it is a just one. It proceeds against Molina on grounds which we do *not* hold, *but which he does*; and it is therefore fair to hold *him* to them and their consequences. It is to be regretted that Dr. Bledsoe did not perceive this obvious character of our argument on this head, as he might have thus saved himself from sundry confusions which are especially preposterous. The Molinist supposes that the divine mind *infers* what the human free will may please to do, "from all the circumstances in which these free agents will be placed, and the motives present to their mind." But on his and Dr. Bledsoe's theory of volition, these circumstances and motives furnish no ground for any inference; because they say that there is no efficient or certain tie of influence between the free volition and the circumstances or motives, or both together. Of all the men in the world, they are the last who have any business with such an inference as to what free volitions will be; because the very heart of their theory cuts all tie of efficient influence between the proposed premises and conclusion. We Calvinists are

the men who are entitled consistently to draw that inference, because we believe that there is an efficient tie between (subjective) motive and volition. We have not, like Dr. Bledsoe and his Molinist friends, cut our premises and conclusions fatally asunder. And we, reasoning experimentally, after that inferential manner suitable to temporal and finite minds, actually do infer, in a multitude of cases, what free agents will choose, from our knowledge of "circumstances and motives." And we can see how, if God did also reason deductively, (which he does not,) as the Molinist supposes, he also could, in *all* cases, infer what *all* free agents will choose to do, from his prescience of their "circumstances and motives;" that is, provided our Calvinistic theory of the efficient influence of motives is the true one. And, inasmuch as God sees all truths, both truths of relation and all others, not deductively, but immediately and intuitively, we suppose that God eternally and intuitively sees what free agents are going to choose, in relation to the foreseen motives which are going to cause these free choices. That is, we suppose God's intuitive prescience is *exactly according to the actual fact*; and as these future free volitions, when they come, are to come out of the efficient influence of motives in the men's spirits, God foresees them as thus connected. And this is the way, we suppose, God has, not a *scientia media*, but a *scientia visionis*, of all that free agents are going to choose; a *scientia visionis* which, while not an inference from premises after the mode of our successive, discursive thought, is yet an intuition of truths in their destined relations. We are certain the matter is now clear to the candid reader; and we even venture to hope, to Dr. Bledsoe. One thing is clear to all except him: whether God's foreknowledge of free volitions were an inference from premises, or an intuition of truths in relation, it must be equally impossible for a correctly thinking mind to think the two parts of the truth in relation, if Dr. Bledsoe were right in saying the relation does not exist. But this is his position: "Motives not related to volitions by any tie of certain efficiency." And we humbly presume that God's omniscience no more enables him to think this erroneous solecism, which no rational man can think, than God's infinite holiness could enable him consistently

to do an act which would be intrinsically wicked if done by his inferior, man. There is the sum of this whole matter.

8. The way is now prepared for our eighth argument in support of the efficient influence of subjective motives over volitions. As we saw it was implied in the Bible doctrine of original sin, so it is necessarily implied in the doctrine of regeneration. What is it? That God so exerts a gracious efficiency upon the depraved soul, (called in Scripture "the new creation unto good works," the "new birth," or birth from above, the "quickening," the "illumination," the "heavenly calling," etc.,) that the souls hitherto certainly self-determined to ungodliness are now graciously yet freely determined to certain perseverance in godliness. They "are created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them." They "are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." They cannot practise habitual sin, because they "are born of a living and incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever." Such is the work. Now, it is impossible that this permanent effect can be graciously propagated, consistently with free agency, except on the theory of a tie of efficiency between the renewed disposition, with its holy subjective motives, and the free volitions of the soul in this gracious state. This is the *minimum* postulate on which the doctrine of regeneration can possibly hold, and man yet remain a free agent. If grace turns man into a stock, or a machine, or an irrational sentient beast, which moves at the spur of a mere instinct provoked from without, then it is conceivable how grace may certainly and regularly evoke the series of acts which is outwardly conformed to godliness. But then, where is free agency? If we retain free agency, we must either hold to the causative and efficient influence of motives over free volitions, or we must give up the Bible doctrine of regeneration.

Dr. Bledsoe makes an impotent attempt to reconcile the difficulty. In the chapter cited from his *Theodicy*, he teaches that motives, while not the efficient of volitions, are their invariable antecedents. The judgments of the intelligence, if incorrect, may be antecedents to wrong choices. The desires of the heart, if perverse, may be antecedents to wrong choices. Both these

functions of spirit he supposes to be purely passive. He can concede, then, that grace may omnipotently renovate these passive antecedents of free choice, without infringing the freedom of the will; and this is regeneration. Such is his scheme. The fatal defect is, that according to that theory, which is his corner-stone, *such regeneration would not ENSURE a single holy act*, much less an infallible perseverance in holy strivings. For these "necessitated" states of passivity, correct judgments of intellect, and right desires, he tells us, are *not efficient*, but only antecedents, to volitions. These arise in the will itself, "not determined, but determinations," connected by no tie of efficiency with "any antecedents in or out of the mind." What can be plainer then, than this: that according to Dr. Bledsoe, God might "necessitate" these antecedents, and yet procure not a single holy volition! The whole scheme is naught.

9. The last argument we adduce is the well known *reductio ad absurdum*, which has descended from the Scholastics to President Edwards. If the will is self-determined, since this faculty has but the single and sole function of volition, it must be by a prior volition that it determines itself to the given choice. But now the question recurs, What determined the will to that prior volition? The only answer is, an earlier volition, still prior to this; because the faculty of choice, which is supposed to exert the self-determination, has but the one function. Thus, it must have chosen to choose, and we have a ridiculous *regressus*, to which there is no consistent end. Dr. Bledsoe endeavors to escape this argument by two expedients. One is to say that he does not use the words, "the will self-determined," "the will determines itself," along with all prior advocates of his theory of free will. They ought not to have used such language, he holds; it is not correct. He tells us they have been all off the track in debating the question whether motives determine the will, or whether the will determines itself: for in fact the will is not determined at all; it determines. Its sole function, volition, *is not an act determined, but a determination*. This is as pretty a *couundrum* as was ever made up of a mere verbal quibble. "Volition is simply a determination," quoth 'a. But did ever

one hear of an action without an agent? Who or what does the determining in this *determinatio*? Only the will, says Dr. Bledsoe. Then the will determines—what? Oh, says Dr. Bledsoe, the will determines not itself, but its volition. But what is volition save *a function of itself*? Then the stubborn fact remains, that on his theory the will does determine itself. All the rest of the semi-Pelagian and Pelagian worlds were not fools, nor was Dr. Bledsoe the only wise man among them. The phrase, “the will determines itself,” is, on their theory, perfectly correct and unavoidable. Dr. Bledsoe's other evasion is to blink the fact, on which Edwards's argument in part hinges, that when the specific faculty of will is made self-determining, then our opponents are shut up to the concession that it must determine itself to choose by an act of choice, since this is its sole function, viz. : emitting acts of choice. The other functions of spirit all belong to other faculties.

From this point of view the reader can easily see how shortsighted and impotent is the effort which our author makes, in many places, to wrest this famous argument from Edwards and turn it against him. Dr. Bledsoe pleads, that the only way for us Calvinists to avoid the absurd result of a *regressus* without end, is to adopt his notion of volitions arising in the will determined by nothing. For, reasons he, if Calvinists say that volition cannot arise save from some other mental modification or function, prior to volition, and the efficient thereof, then he has equal right to say that this prior mental modification must also have had its prior efficient to produce it. And if we demur to his logic, he will prostrate us with the same formidable maxim, *ex nihilo nihil*, with which we threatened him when he advanced his volition without efficient cause. Here, again, we have a smart quibble; that is all. He forgets that the something for which he asserts absolutely self-determined (or, if he prefers it so, undetermined action) is a specific faculty in the soul, which his theory absolutely severs from all tie of efficient relation to any other faculty. But the thing for which our theory claims self-determination is, not a severed faculty, but the soul itself, the spiritual agent, qualified consistently by all its related faculties



of intellect, and appetency and sensibility. *There* is the vital difference. Dr. Bledsoe's theory is guilty of asserting, in this undetermined faculty, a function which would be *ens ex nihilo*; and it is also guilty of derationalising this function of choice by thus severing it from all efficient relation with the regulative faculties of the soul. But, according to our view, it is *the soul* which has the function of originating modifications in itself on occasion of suitable objectives. Therein is its spontaneity. The soul *does originate* new modifications of thought and appetency. We need no *regressus* without end to account for a given act of thought or appetency in the mind. But the simple question is, How are the several faculties related to each other in their efficient inter-action? Which is directive, and which executive? Are the conjoined faculties of intelligence and appetency directive of the will, the faculty of choice? That is what common sense and the Bible declare. Or is the faculty of choice, the executive faculty, unrelated by any efficient tie to any directive faculty? That is Dr. Bledsoe's theory; and we assert that it disjoins the soul, leaves man a blind agent, and confounds the whole psychology on which rational agency and responsibility rest. It is perfectly true that we must assign to the soul some function, somewhere, of self-caused action, else we should be involved, for each mental state and act, in an endless *regressus* of mental causations, and real spontaneity would be lost. But the point of the matter is this: that the naked function of volition, as among the related functions of the soul, is the very one which cannot be, in Dr. Bledsoe's sense, self-caused.

It should not be concealed here that there is a sense in which every change in the world of mind is connected with a chain of efficiencies, which goes back to eternity; which is a literal *regressus in infinitum*. We speak, now, of that providential control over souls and their states and acts, which the Almighty secretly exerts, in the endless execution, in and through men, of his eternal decree. But both consciousness and Scripture assure us, that the way in which this providence operates does not infringe our true spontaneity. And as the point now in debate

is not the theology, but the psychology of human volitions, we content ourselves with simply recording this truth.

We are now prepared to approach the remaining task which we assigned ourselves, to examine Dr. Bledsoe's peculiar phase of the theory of free will, and ascertain whether it contains anything entitled to modify our views. Many of his arguments have been already considered and refuted in connection with our affirmative establishment of the Calvinistic doctrine. Repetition will be avoided as much as possible.

We have seen how our author, conscious of the utter overthrow Edwards has given to the proposition, that "the will determines itself," endeavors to change the issue of the debate. All the great men, like Dr. Reid, who have made inconsistent attempts to sustain his view of free will, he thinks have conceded too much. They have allowed it to be taken for granted that volitions are determined somehow; and, rejecting the doctrine that they are determined by subjective motives, have attempted to show that they are determined by the will. But on that position, Dr. Bledsoe confesses, Edwards has utterly overthrown them. So he would take a higher position: *that volitions are not determined at all*; that they are not *effects of any* efficient cause. If he is met by the maxim, *ex nihilo nihil*, his evasion is, to say that volitions arise from the mind, and the mind is something. But he would concede to Edwards, against his own friends, that it is not correct to say "the will is self-determined" to choose; or that the will "remains *in equilibrio* in the act of choice;" or that the mind is conscious at the moment of choosing of a "power of contrary choice." He admits the fatal logic of our champions against these positions. Now, upon these admissions we remark, first, is it not a little presumptuous for this last champion thus to criticise the positions of all the great men upon his own side? Is he alone the consistent advocate of their common theory of free will? Common sense will rather incline to the conclusion that these great and astute advocates of the Arminian philosophy knew what they were about, at least as well as Dr. Bledsoe. We surmise that they declined to adopt his favorite position of *an undetermined determination*, not from shortsightedness, but be-

cause, like us, they regarded it as intrinsically absurd. We hold with them, that if either their or Dr. Bledsoe's theory of free will were true, then it must result that the will is *in equilibrio* as to motives. Very true, the will cannot be *undecided when it decides*, but, on their common theory, it remains *in equilibrio quoad* the motives competing to influence the choice. Whatever inconveniences Edwards's logic has attached to this position, Dr. Bledsoe will have to abide. So "the power of contrary choice" must be claimed if his theory be true; for if the will, when choosing an affirmative choice, had not the power to choose the contrary, it was efficiently determined from that contrary to the affirmative,—the very doctrine Dr. Bledsoe abhors. These attempts to modify the old doctrine of absolute free will are, therefore, but virtual confessions of its overthrow.

But the kernel of Dr. Bledsoe's doctrine of the will is in his notion of cause and effect. He asserts that the mind has no notion of "effect," save as it is physical change produced in a passive subject. He asserts that no true agent can be so the subject of causation, as that thereby its active function shall be produced efficiently. He regards passivity as of the essence of all true effects. Act and effect with him belong to irreconcilable categories. He is even rash enough to say that "a change in matter is the only idea we have of an effect;" and on p. 81, Examination of Edwards, that "we have no experience of an act of mind produced by a preceding act of mind." He is willing to grant that the volition has conditions *sine qua non*, but denies that it has any efficient cause.

Now, the intelligent reader will have noticed, that all this is simply a *petitio principii*. Whether in the dependent being, man, the action of the soul can be efficiently produced, and yet be proper action, is the very question to be proved in this discussion, and not to be assumed, as Dr. Bledsoe does. To say that an effect proper must be a change wrought on a *passive* subject, is simply begging the very question to be settled. That the assumption is not true as to conscious volitions, we have proved (not assumed) in our affirmative discussion. That it is not true of other activities of the mind, as a general proposition,

is easily proved both by Scripture and reason. When, for instance, the Apostle tells us of God's "*working in us*, both to will *and to do*, of his good pleasure," have we not a truly *caused action*? According to Dr. Bledsoe effect is limited to the realms of matter and instinct; there is no class of rational and spiritual effects that are truly effects. Yet every man in the world (doubtless including Dr. Bledsoe) aims to produce them! For instance, all speak of evidence as *producing* mental conviction. Oftentimes the conviction of mind is an effect of evidence as inevitable and certain as any physical effect in the world. Now, we know that Dr. Bledsoe will attempt to exclude this class of mental effects, so fatal to his position, by saying that the functions of the intelligence are passive. But no psychologist will say so. No other philosopher will rank the intellect among the "passive powers" of the soul. He is refuted again by all the numberless instances in which volition itself is directed, not upon the bodily members, but upon our own mental faculties. Dr. Bledsoe says that it is the very nature of volition, not to be a real effect, but to produce real effects. Well, let the latter part of his assertion be true, and then, in every case in which volition is directed upon the action of our own mental faculties, he has refuted himself. There is the case, for instance, of voluntary attention, in which the will directs the intellect, and energises it to its highest and most creative acts of cognition. But why multiply words? Does Dr. Bledsoe require us to think that the familiar phrase, "self-government," is a mere metaphor, save as it is applied to the direction of our limbs and sense-organs? If not, he must admit that there are multitudes of cases in which acts of mind are causes of other acts of mind.

So hard pressed does Dr. Bledsoe evidently feel himself, by the difficulties of his position, that he even resorts to a wretched piece of genuine sensationalist analysis, worthy of James Mill himself, to account for our very notion of cause and effect, p. 77: "The only way in which the mind ever comes to be furnished with the ideas of cause and effect at all is this: we are conscious that we will a certain motion *in the body*, and we discover that the motion follows the volition," etc. Surely it is not necessary

at this day to refute this analysis, and to prove that such instances as these, of conscious (or observed) causations, are merely the occasions and not the sources of our rational notions of cause and effect. God and angels have no bodies, no limbs, to be moved by volitions; hence, according to this marvellous explanation, they would not have any notion of causation at all! Conscious instances of such bodily motions produced by volitions are merely the occasions (and not the only ones) upon which the mind evolves its own *a priori* notion of cause and effect,—the antecedent which contains efficiency to effectuate the consequent—and forms the inevitable judgment, that without such antecedent the consequent change would not have been.

In his third section, our author endeavors to raise a difficulty against the doctrine of the efficiency of motive as producing volition, by asserting that there is no way to measure “the stronger motive.” When Edwards teaches that the choice always is as the stronger motive, the question is asked, What is motive? Let the answer be, motive is the complex of all that in the mind which immediately produces the volition. How, then, asks Dr. Bledsoe, is it known which is “the stronger motive?” Edwards replies, as he supposes, by the fact that it is the one which the volition follows. And then he charges, that Edwards has proceeded in a circle: first assuming that the volition must follow the stronger motive, and then, that the motive the volition actually followed was the stronger. Now that this cavilling is fallacious may be shown by a parallel fact. By precisely the same process Dr. Bledsoe might show that the science of mechanics is all fallacious. But he doubtless believes in the laws of mechanics. The motion of a body will be in the direction of the stronger force, will it not? Undoubtedly. But how is the relative strength of forces measured? By the motion they produce. The stronger force will overcome the greater resistance, will it not? Yes. But how is the relative strength of the force estimated? By the amount of resistance it overcomes. Have we not here, then, the very same “circular” process? Undoubtedly. Yet Dr. Bledsoe believes firmly in the validity of these mechanical laws, in spite of our cavil! Then his parallel cavil is worthless



as against Edwards. The truth is, that on Dr. Bledsoe's empirical philosophy the cavil would be insoluble for him in either case, though worthless in both cases. The solution is, that our necessary conviction of the great law of causation is not derived from experience as he supposes, but is an *a priori* result of the law of the reason; and it is law which alone enables us to formulate our experience rationally. It is not experience which has gradually taught us that every motion in bodies is an effect of related force, and that every deliberate responsible volition is the effect of subjective motive. It is intuition which prepares our minds thus to construe the sequences of change given us by observation. And by the same law of the intuitive judgment, which demands a cause for every change, we know that cause must be adequate to and so related in its degree of energy to its effect.

It is very true that, in the case of a given motive in our fellow-creature's mind, we can only determine its relative strength *a posteriori* by its effect in producing volition. But do we ever suppose that the motive derives its strength from this circumstance? No; our reason forbids it.

There is one general but conclusive reply to all of Dr. Bledsoe's argumentation against the efficient certainty of motive. *He has himself made admissions* (unwillingly and under the unconscious stress of common sense) *which retract and destroy his whole theory.* Thus, p. 93, "A desire or affection is the *indispensable condition*, the *invariable antecedent*, of an act of the will." P. 216, "Has volition an efficient cause? I answer, No. Has it 'a sufficient ground and reason' of its existence? I answer, Yes. No one ever imagined that there are no indispensable antecedents to choice, without which it could not take place." . . . . "But a power to act, it will be said, is not a sufficient reason to account for the existence of an action." (He means, of this or that specific action.) "This is true; the reason is to come. The sufficient reason, however, is not an efficient cause; for there is some difference between a blind impulse or force and rationality," pp. 92, 93. "Our volitions might depend on certain desires or affections, but they would not result from the

influence or action of them. . . . The reason why this principle has not been employed by the advocates of free agency, is, I humbly conceive, because it has not been entertained by them." (Jouffroy, as admitted on p. 92, did not "entertain" it.) P. 40, "*The strength of a motive,*" as President Edwards properly remarks, "DEPENDS UPON THE STATE OF THE MIND *to which it is addressed.*" Thus does Dr. Bledsoe stumble unintentionally, but unavoidably, into the Calvinistic doctrine of volition. By "motive" he here means objective inducement, as is perfectly obvious from his describing it as a something "*addressed to the mind.*" So that he has acceded to our position, which is the corner-stone of our whole philosophy of the will, viz., that the strength of objective inducement "depends on the state of the mind." Now then, first, will not that state of the mind be regulative of the volitions, of which these objective inducements are the occasions (not causes)? The affirmative is too plain. And second, what is included in that "STATE of the mind," or, as Dr. Bledsoe expresses it elsewhere, "*nature*" of the mind which is thus found to be efficiently regulative of volitions? This is the crucial question, from the investigation of which he always recoils, by reason of that obstinate confusion of sensibility and conation, of the objective and subjective, with which we charged him in the outset. Had he dared to look this question steadily in the face he would have seen what all common sense recognises—just what the Calvinistic philosophy formulates. This "state," this determinant "*nature,*" is precisely the *habitus*, the *disposition*, regulative of the rise of subjective appetencies, and thus of the volitions which these cause. In this fatal admission, Dr. Bledsoe has refuted his whole refutation. Again, Dr. Bledsoe finds that none of his colleagues, in the advocacy of self-determination of the will, concur with him,—not even Jouffroy, in his idea that while volitions "depend on certain desires or affections," yet they do not "result from their influence or action." No wonder; for they have not Dr. Bledsoe's capacity for self-contradiction. To him alone must belong the unique glory of believing that an event is "not influenced by" what it "depends on!" Again, he teaches that not only a mind but an object and a desire

are the invariable, the indispensable antecedents of volition. Well, sound philosophy teaches that a change has no invariable and indispensable antecedent except its efficient cause. Why should a given antecedent be indispensable to a given consequent, except that it is its cause? It is by this very principle that all the methods of experimental induction into the laws of cause in nature proceed. The philosopher knows that when he has found the invariable indispensable antecedent, *he has the cause*. Hence this is what all his canons of induction are framed to seek for.

Once more: Dr. Bledsoe admits, that while he thinks volition has no efficient cause, yet it has, of course, "its sufficient ground and reason." He exclaims, "There is some difference between blind impulse or force and rationality!" In that we all agree. But is force the only species of cause, and physical motion in the passive body the only species of effect? That is what Dr. Bledsoe assumes without proving. What we proved by Scripture, experience, and reason, was, that there are spiritual causations as well as physical. And we presume again, that Dr. Bledsoe has the unique honor of being the only philosopher, who is not a materialist, who ever denied it. Now, then, in this sphere of spiritual causations, our plain theory is, that *as the effects are rational the causes also are rational*. Now, what is a rational cause save "a sufficient ground and reason?" The Greek, the native language of philosophy, suggests this obvious truth by using the same word for both. *Aitia* is *cause*; and *aitia* is reason of acting; rational, subjective motive.

With this complete answer, which Dr. Bledsoe has given of himself, we conclude our answer. And thanking him for his efficient aid in his own demolition, we make our final bow, reciprocating his courteous wishes for our welfare.