

THE FEDERAL THEOLOGY: ITS IMPORT AND ITS REGULATIVE INFLUENCE.

BY JOHN L. GIRARDEAU, D. D., LL. D., PROFESSOR IN COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

THE subject to which attention is asked on the present occasion is, *The Federal Theology: Its Import and its Regulative Influence.*

It has become almost an adage, that the Church has developed her theology mainly through conflict with error. This must be so from the nature of the case. Attention is not apt to be specially directed to what is undisputed, and our clearest judgments are derived from comparison. The contrast of truth and error, induced by the assertion of the latter, enhances our comprehension of both. The doctrine of the covenants constitutes no exception to this law. It was not brought distinctly under investigation and formally developed until the period succeeding the Reformation. Luther grandly elucidated the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith alone. Justification he saw clearly. Imputation he perceived less distinctly; and he stopped short of the controlling principle of federal representation. Even Calvin, magnificently endowed as he was by his abilities and learning for a systematic treatment of revealed truth, although he produced a theological work distinguished for its comprehensive grasp of the doctrines of religion in their relation to each other, did not seem to have had his mind definitely turned to the federal scheme.

It was when Placæus broached his theory of the mediate imputation of Adam's sin, that the attention of the Reformed Church was thoroughly aroused to the importance and scope of the federal theology. The theologians of the Dutch School, in their massive works, subjected it to a full, if not an exhaustive, consideration; and their example was followed by some of the most illustrious divines of England and Scotland. And while Cunningham, Hodge, and our own Thornwell have trodden in their footsteps, and evinced in their discussions their sense of the importance of

the federal system—a fact for which the present generation of Calvinists should be devoutly thankful—it is to be feared that indications are beginning to manifest themselves of a growing tendency towards a departure from this type of theology. Especially would it be for a lamentation should it disappear from the pulpit—the grand organ by which divine truth is brought into contact with the masses. And as surely as the pulpit drifts away from it, will it more and more cast its instructions in the mould of a wretched legalism; or, losing the influence of this pervading genius of theological truth, and so lapsing from any thorough-going inculcation of doctrine, it will more and more neglect its heavenly call to be an instructor of Christ's people, and sink its high didactic office into that of a vapid and sensational haranguer. The present effort is essayed not alone from sympathy with the intrinsic value of the theme, but also in the hope of citing attention, in some humble degree at least, to the necessity of keeping it before the mind of the Church. But, not to consume time with preliminary observations, I hasten to consider:

I. The Import of the Federal Theology.

Let us begin with the covenant of grace, for the reason that its existence and the operation of the representative principle in connexion with it are more clearly and explicitly set forth in the Scriptures than are the fact of the covenant of works and the way in which its results are entailed. Admitting the analogy between the two covenants which the Apostle Paul affirms, we shall by this method gain the advantage of expounding the obscurer case by that which is the more definitely revealed.

There would seem to be no necessity to distinguish, as some have done, between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace as two separate covenants: the former as conceived to exist between God the Father and Christ, and the latter between God and the elect. For, in the first place, the law of parcimony opposes the supposition of two covenants. This presumption could only be removed by such explicit testimony of Scripture to the existence of two as can hardly be contended for in the face of another construction of its teaching by so many theologians. In the second place, it is inconceivable that God would have entered

into a covenant with sinners except in Christ as Mediator and Federal Head. To say that one covenant was made with the Son and another with the elect, is to assume as the differentia of the latter the fact that it was not made with them in Christ, but apart from him. But that cannot be admitted. To reply that the covenant, though not made with him, was made with the elect as in him, is to give up the distinction. The covenant, according to the ordinary conception and statement of it, was at the same time made with him and with his elect seed in him. It is wholly unwarrantable to hold that a federal arrangement should obtain in relation to sinners, except as they are represented by a federal head. The covenant with Christ, therefore, embraced the covenant with his elect constituency. They are never dealt with except as they are in him. In the third place, let it be conceded that the covenant wears two aspects, one immediately contemplating Christ as federal head and representative, and the other, the elect as beneficiaries, and they are evinced to be but separate faces of the same great compact by the consideration that the privileges, graces, and duties of the elect are benefits conferred upon them in Christ, are but parts of that salvation which he meritoriously secured for them by his perfect performance of covenanted righteousness. Their faith, it is true, as an indispensable duty, conditions their subjective and conscious union to Christ, but faith is the necessary result of regeneration, in which they are the passive recipients of the grace acquired for them by their federal head. That which is held to be a covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of redemption, may be regarded as but a testamentary administration, in behalf of the elect, of the one eternal covenant between the Father and the Son. It may be added, in the fourth place, that the analogy between the covenant of grace and that of works, which is universally admitted to have been but one, and the language of the Calvinistic symbols which must be strained to support any other supposition, oppose strong presumptive evidence to the hypothesis of two distinct covenants. It is one and the same covenant, which, regarded in relation to the means employed and the end contemplated, is denominated the covenant of redemption, that is emphatically

designated the covenant of grace when conceived in reference to its source, and to its unmerited application to sinners as the recipients of its benefits. It is peculiarly a covenant of grace to them, since its legal condition was fulfilled, not by themselves, but by another for them, guilty and corrupt.

But whatever view is maintained concerning this question, let it be understood that, in this discussion, allusion is had to that "covenant of grace" which was in eternity made by God the Father "with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect as his seed."¹

In this covenant the principle of representation was involved as an essential element. Christ, by the appointment of the Father, and by his own spontaneous election, became the legal representative of the elect seed who were given to him to be redeemed. He undertook all their legal responsibilities, as well those which related them to the preceptive requirements of the moral law, as those which bound them as transgressors to endure its penalty. Whatever the law exacted of them, in order to their justification, he as their representative obligated himself to render. The life of obedience due from them he engaged to live, the death demanded of them he bound himself to die.

It is indispensable to a just apprehension of this vitally important subject, to notice that what was a covenant of redeeming grace to his seed was a covenant of works to Christ. It was they, not he, who needed to be redeemed; they, not he, who were to be debtors to grace. He stood under the covenant, as the second Adam, a probationer, required and undertaking to render perfect, personal obedience to every demand of law, in order to the justification of his seed in him.

This exhaustive obedience he performed. Viewed in relation to the commands of the law, it may properly be denominated preceptive obedience; in relation to its curse, penal obedience. It is usual to distinguish these two aspects of it by the terms *active* and *passive* obedience. But it was both, during his life and at his death, at the same time active and passive. From the incompletion of his obedience he suffered, and at the climax of his suffer-

¹Westminster Larg. Cat., Quest. 31.

ings he acted. From beginning to end he was a suffering actor, an acting sufferer. In life and death, consequently, and in relation to precept and penalty alike, he rendered obedience. This obedience was marred by not the slightest flaw—it was absolutely perfect. By it justice was completely satisfied and the law gloriously exalted.

Did the limits of this discourse permit it, convincing proof could be furnished of the necessity—which has been disputed by some Calvinists even—that Christ should have rendered obedience to the precept of the law in order to the justification of his seed, and that this preceptive righteousness should be imputed to them, in order to the attainment of that end. That cannot now be attempted. Suffice it to say, that the elect seed of Christ were not merely, by virtue of his propitiatory sufferings, to be placed in a condition of confirmed innocence—of everlasting exemption from punishment, but to be entitled, on the ground of a perfect and unchallenged obedience to the preceptive requirements of the law, to the positive communications of the divine favor. Not only was it incumbent on Christ to deliver his people from the death incurred by the fall of Adam, but as the second Adam to do what the first was required to do—to pay obedience to the precepts of the law. That, strictly speaking, is righteousness, and that the glorious representative of the elect wrought out for them. He produced a perfect obedience to the whole law, and therefore won for himself an adorable name by which he is known in the assemblies of the saints—“the Lord our righteousness.” Like the seamless robe he wore on the day of his crucifixion, the righteousness of Jesus is without division. “Let us not rend it,” but regard it, as he himself produced it—a grand totality, one and indivisible.

The question now necessarily arises, what were the results secured by this covenanted obedience of Christ to all the requirements of the divine law? The inquiry need not here be pressed, whether he, considered as an individual, was bound to render obedience to the law for himself, although I confess to a concurrence in the view of those theologians who maintain that he was; so far, at least, as a preceptive rule was concerned. Antecedent-

ly under no obligation to obey the law which he administered, yet having voluntarily subjected himself, as incarnate, to its scope, he came by that free act under obligation to comply with its demands. If it was possible for him to be "made under law," it was possible for him, as an individual, to be obligated by its authority.

But the question is in regard to his obedience considered as that of the head and representative of his elect seed. What, in that capacity, did he by his obedience secure? In the general, the answer must be: all the benefits of redemption. But foremost among these blessings—the special answer is—he secured justification for himself and for his seed in him.

It may be objected to this statement, that it is inadmissible to affirm that Christ was justified, and that all which can properly be said is, that he secured the justification of his seed. This objection cannot be supported upon grounds derived from the Calvinistic conception of the principle of representation as employed in the plan of redemption. That Christ, upon the completion of his covenanted obedience, was justified, is evinced, in the first place, by the analogy between him as the federal representative of his seed under the covenant of grace and Adam as the federal representative of his posterity under the covenant of works. If Adam had performed the condition of the covenant, he would have been justified as federal representative. As Christ fulfilled the condition of the same covenant both as to its precept and its penalty, he was justified as federal representative. The consideration that Adam's obedience was contingent, while Christ's was not, makes no difference as to the result contemplated. The certainty, that Christ would fulfil the condition upon which justification was suspended, only rendered that justification certain. Both the first and second Adams were probationers under the provisions of a legal covenant, which conditioned justification upon perfect, personal obedience to law. The difference between them is, that in one case the stipulated reward was missed, and in the other it was won. In the second place, the justification of Christ is proved by the fact that he voluntarily assumed the guilt of his seed, and that it was judicially imputed

to him by God the Father. If he had not been justified from it by the authority which formally attached it to him, that guilt would have remained upon him. Either he was, before his resurrection, federally guilty or he was not. If he was not, the guilt of his people was not transferred to him, and therefore continues upon them. That is out of the question. If he was, his guilt had to be removed in order to the removal of theirs, for his guilt was theirs. But the non-imputation of guilt, or, what is the same thing, its removal, is an essential element of justification. Now, Christ's voluntarily assumed guilt was not imputed to him after his resurrection and ascension. Consequently, he was justified. He had perfectly satisfied infinite justice by the sacrifice of himself for sin, and the Father publicly and formally absolved him from the guilt which he had previously reckoned to his account.

The only difficulty which can attach to this view is one which springs from the grievous misapprehension, that it implies the pardon of Christ as a personal sinner. It would certainly be rank blasphemy to intimate that he labored under an inherent and conscious guilt which needed to be remitted. It is quite another thing to say, that his imputed guilt was removed by God's justifying sentence: a reward to which he had entitled himself by his unimpeachable obedience to law.

But, further, the justification of Christ involved the justification of his elect seed. Not that it is now intended to affirm—what, of course, is true—that his justification secured that of his people, as one to be subjectively and consciously experienced by them in the course of their mortal existence. What is meant is, that at the very moment and in the very act of his justification theirs was, in a sense, effected. They were justified when he was justified. This is not the Antinomian doctrine of an actual justification in eternity. To that extraordinary notion it is impossible to attach any intelligible meaning. What divines have termed decretive justification, that is, the eternal purpose of God to justify the elect, is at once true and apprehensible; but one finds as much difficulty in grasping the idea of an actual eternal justification as in conceiving “a chimæra buzzing about in a vacuum.”

There is a distinction which is now strangely neglected, but to which the Calvinistic theology ought to be recalled, as vital to its consistency and completeness. It is one which was maintained by some of the most eminent divines of the seventeenth century—by such men as Witsius and others of the Dutch school, and Owen, Charnock, and Halyburton. It is the distinction between what was variously termed fundamental, or general, or active, or virtual, justification on the one hand, and what was denominated passive or actual justification on the other. The import of it is that, on the one hand, the elect were, in mass, justified *in foro Dei*, in the justification of Christ as their federal head and representative; and that, on the other hand, they are severally justified *in foro conscientie*, when in the period of their earthly history they actually exercise faith in Christ. In the first instance they are conceived as justified constructively, federally, representatively; in the second, subjectively and consciously. In the first, they were justified independently of their voluntary concurrence; in the second, they are justified through their conscious exercise of faith.

In the vindication and enforcement of this great discrimination, I shall employ the terms *virtual* and *actual* justification, in compliance with an old usage, albeit for the sake of accuracy *representative* and *conscious* might be preferred.

If the doctrine of the Covenant be scriptural, it is too plain to need proof that there is a federal oneness of Christ and his seed. When as their representative he yielded obedience to the law in order to justification, they yielded that obedience in him. His representative acts and experiences, in relation to that end, were theirs. Otherwise the principle of representation is a figment and the term *representative* a sham. Did he as their representative obey the precept of the law? They obeyed in him. Was he crucified? They were crucified with him. Did he rise from the dead? They rose with him. What hinders, then, that we should hold that when he was justified, they were justified with him? That consequence must follow if he was justified as their head and representative. Not subjectively and consciously, but federally and representatively, they

obeyed, died, rose again, and were, in God's heavenly court, justified, in Christ.

Now, inasmuch as no justification at God's bar is conceivable except upon the ground of a perfect righteousness, it is obvious that the elect seed of Christ must have been, in some sense, adjudged to be righteous in order to their virtual justification. That sense is, that they were righteous by imputation. In no other way could those who were not conceived as having consciously wrought righteousness have by the divine Judge been regarded as righteous. Indeed, the most of those so justified, including nearly the whole New Testament Church, were not even in existence, and of course were not the subjects of regeneration. Christ's righteousness was, in God's court, imputed to them in order to their justification in him. Here, then, it deserves to be noticed, we have a case of "antecedent and immediate imputation" of righteousness—antecedent, since the imputation preceded the spiritual birth of the elect; immediate, since it was not conditioned by or mediated through inherent and conscious holiness.

The elect seed of Christ having been thus, in the court of heaven, virtually justified in him their representative, were invested with a right and title to eternal life. Then, when their earthly history emerges, their righteous Advocate and priestly Intercessor, at God's appointed time, sues out for them the gift of the Holy Spirit, who, imparted to them by the mediatorial King, enters into them, convinces them of their sin and misery, illuminates them in the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour, regenerates them, and enables them to exercise that faith which conditions their conscious and actual union with Jesus. Not now are they, for the first time, federally and representatively, but subjectively and consciously justified. This is their actual, in contradistinction from their virtual, justification. In the order of production it succeeds regeneration, as, in that order, virtual precedes it.

In opposition to the view which has thus been expounded in regard to the operation of the representative principle, the objection may be urged, that as the elect, in their natural, unregenerate condition, are in a state of condemnation, it is difficult if not

impossible to conceive how at the same time they are in a state of justification; that is to say, how God can regard them as at one and the same time justified and condemned. This difficulty is by no means insuperable.

1. The statement of the objection supposes that the terms justification and condemnation are always employed respectively in the same sense. If this were true, the difficulty would be unanswerable. It would involve a contradiction to say that one is justified and not justified in one and the same sense; or that, in one and the same sense, he is condemned and not condemned. But it does not imply a contradiction to affirm that one is justified in one sense and not justified in another sense; or that he is condemned in one sense and not condemned in another sense. Now virtual justification is one sort of justification, and actual is another; so that it involves no contradiction to say that one is virtually justified and not actually justified at one and the same time. Nor does it imply a contradiction to maintain that one is actually condemned and not virtually condemned at one and the same time. Virtual justification and virtual condemnation are mutually exclusive, but not virtual justification and actual condemnation. The latter may co-exist without contradiction. It follows, therefore, that God is not inconsistent with himself when at the same time he regards the elect unregenerate sinner as virtually justified and as not actually justified. These two sentences are consistent with each other, inasmuch as they have respect to different kinds of justification. To say that a thing is round and square at one and the same time would be a contradiction, but it would not be contradictory to assert that, at one and the same time, it is round and white.

The same thing is made still more apparent by varying the terms and thus viewing it in different lights. The elect sinner may be considered as justified *de jure*, but not *de facto*. He has in Christ, previously to actual justification, a right to be actually justified; that is, not a right in conscious possession, but one existing in the judgment of God. So an infant may be *de jure* a sovereign, while he is *de facto* a subject. Or, the elect sinner may be contemplated as potentially but not actually justified. So a be-

liever, in this world, is potentially possessed of heaven, but not actually; and it involves no contradiction to say of him that he is, at one and the same time, possessed of heaven and not possessed of it. And it enhances the view now urged to remember that the potentiality is in Christ and not in the elect unregenerate sinner himself. It is not one which is evolved into fact by an inherent law or tendency, but developed by virtue of a divine arrangement into which his subjective experience in no degree enters as a ground.

2. The case receives additional clearness when we reflect that these respective sentences of justification are issued in different courts—the one, in God's heavenly court, the other, in the court of the elect sinner's conscience. It is true that the Judge who passes sentence is one and the same: it is God who justifies in either case; but as the sentences are related to different kinds of justification, so the spheres of emission are distinct—the courts are different in which they are respectively pronounced. While, therefore, in accordance with the facts of representation God justly declares the elect unregenerate sinner justified in the court of heaven, with equal justice, in accordance with the subjective and conscious facts of experience, he treats him as not justified but condemned. The elect unconverted man sustains, at the same time, two different relations. In accordance with one he is entitled to God's favor; in conformity with the other, he is subject to his displeasure.

3. If it be still contended that it implies inconsistency to say that God has in Christ justified the sinner, and therefore regards him with a love of complacency, while yet the sinner is under his wrath and curse, it may be replied: first, that the same difficulty holds, in part, of God's electing love. The truth is, that in both cases, God loves the sinner complacently before his conversion, because he views him as in Christ; and at the same time he disapproves him as viewed in himself. In Christ, and for Christ's sake, he is entitled to love; in himself, as apart from Christ, he is deserving of hate. Secondly, even after the elect sinner's actual justification, he is in God's regard lovable and damnable at one and the same time—lovable as contemplated in Christ, his glorious head; damnable as viewed in his sinful self.

Enough has been said to show that the doctrine of a virtual or representative justification of the elect seed of Christ in God's court, and the "antecedent and immediate imputation" to them of Christ's righteousness and its resultant rewardableness, is not encompassed with contradictions. It is the only doctrine of justification which harmonises the Calvinistic system with itself, and saves it from a Baxterian compromise with Arminian views.

Let us now, in the light of this exposition, turn to the parallel case of the operation of the great principle of federal representation in the covenant of works. The limits of this discourse will not allow a development of the scriptural proofs that the covenant of works existed, or that Adam was the federal representative of his posterity. The record in Genesis, the very definite and precise comparison instituted between the first Adam and the second in the fifth chapter of Romans, the brief but pregnant statement of the same comparison in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and the argument in the second chapter of Hebrews, in respect to the necessity of the incarnation, and of the conformity of the second Adam to the law by which the relation of the first to his seed was controlled—these passages of the inspired word furnish conclusive evidence of the positions advanced. But these proofs being, as admitted by the whole Calvinistic body, now assumed, and regard being especially had to the analogy between Christ and Adam, as the heads of their respective covenants, and representatives of their federal constituents, the question will be considered, What was the result which might have flowed, what the result which did flow, from the representative relation which Adam sustained to his seed?

According to the constitution by which Adam was appointed a legal, in contradistinction from a merely parental, head and representative, all that he might have done in rendering obedience to law might have been done by his seed, and the fatal act which he did *was* done by them. This, if he were strictly their representative, must be true in accordance with the universally admitted maxim, *qui facit per alium facit per se*. He was their agent; he acted not only for himself, but for them, and they acted in him. It may be incidentally remarked that one holy act of Adam did not induce

justification. A course of obedience—how extended, we cannot know—was required of him in order to the acquisition of the reward. Consequently, had Adam stood, the whole series of holy acts up to the moment of justification would have been representative acts, and would therefore have been legally shared by his seed. But there was no necessity that all his sinful acts should be representative. A single act of transgression, from the nature of the case, entailed condemnation. It was the signal of doom. The legal probation was closed; the reward of the covenant was forfeited, and its death-penalty incurred.

Now, had Adam fulfilled the condition of the covenant, that is, perfect obedience to law, during the specified time of his trial, his posterity would have fulfilled the condition, would have rendered the obedience in him. So was it, we have seen, in the case of Christ and his seed. The obedience of the representative is the obedience of the represented—yielded not subjectively and consciously, but federally, legally, representatively. Nor does this destroy the reality of the constituents' obedience. A representative obedience is as real as a conscious. They are differently conditioned, but they are both real.

It follows, also, that had Adam been justified, his posterity would in him have been justified *in foro Dei*. They would have had, previously to their conscious existence, a virtual justification in him as their head and representative. The analogy holds between the virtual justification of Christ's seed in his justification and the virtual justification of Adam's descendants in him, on the supposition that he had fulfilled his probation. As no justification can take place except upon the ground of a perfect righteousness, the race, according to the supposition sharing his justification, would have been, in the court of heaven, justified on the ground of Adam's righteousness imputed to them. There would, then, it is clear, have been an "antecedent and immediate imputation" to them of the righteousness of their federal representative—antecedent, as anticipating their personal existence and inherent holiness; immediate, as directly terminating on them without being mediated through their conscious virtue. And when they emerged into individual existence, they would—I am

bold enough, pursuing the analogy, to think—have been actually justified upon their conscious acceptance of God's appointed method of justification; they would, in a word, have been both virtually and actually justified on the ground of imputed righteousness. It would have been nature's plan, as it is that of recovering grace.

But Adam fell. Following the lead of the representative principle, we cannot err in affirming that his act of disobedience was the race's act of disobedience. "They sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression." They sinned in him, they performed his fatal act, not subjectively and consciously, but federally, legally, representatively. It is equally evident that his condemnation was theirs. He was condemned not merely on his own individual account, but as their legal representative; consequently, they were condemned in him. The sentence, passed in God's heavenly court, terminated at the same time upon him and upon his federal constituents. It was pronounced not *in foro conscientiæ*, but *in foro Dei*. But as no sentence of condemnation can be justly pronounced except upon the ground of guilt, and as Adam's posterity were not in conscious existence when they were thus condemned, his guilt—the guilt of his first sin as representatively their sin—was imputed to them as the ground of their condemnation. It was not their guilt as contracted subjectively and consciously, but as incurred federally, legally, representatively. In the former sense, the guilt was that which attached to another's sin—*peccatum alienum*; in the latter, it was a guilt which resulted from their own sin. The distinction is scriptural and obvious, and it is the only one which even approximately relieves the difficulties which the speculative reason encounters in its attempt to construe the facts of the case. But whether the thinking faculty is satisfied by it or not, faith accepts the exposition which it recognises as furnished by Inspiration itself.

Here, then, we have again an "antecedent and immediate imputation"—the imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity, which was antecedent to their personal existence and subjective depravity, and which was immediate, as not conditioned by or

mediated through their conscious corruption. The parallelism between the two Adams and their respective seeds is, in the points indicated, without a jarring element, condemnation being substituted for justification in the instance of the first Adam and his race. Christ obeyed the law; his seed representatively obeyed the law in him. Adam disobeyed the law; his seed representatively disobeyed the law in him. Christ was justified in God's court; his seed were representatively justified in him in God's court. Adam was condemned in God's court; his seed were representatively condemned in him in the same court. Christ's righteousness and its consequent merit were imputed to his seed as the ground of their justification in the court of heaven; Adam's sin and its consequent guilt were imputed to his seed as the ground of their condemnation in the same court. The imputation of Christ's righteousness and its merit to his seed, in God's court, as the ground of their justification was antecedent to their spiritual birth, and the existence of subjective holiness; the imputation of Adam's sin and its guilt to his seed in God's court as the ground of their condemnation was antecedent to their natural birth and the existence of subjective depravity. The second birth designates the parties upon whom the covenant of grace takes effect; first birth designates the parties upon whom the covenant of works terminates. The new birth in holiness of Christ's seed is the judicial consequence of their antecedent justification in God's court. The first birth in corruption of Adam's seed is the judicial consequence of their antecedent condemnation in God's court. The creation of Christ's seed in holiness is the glorious reward of his obedience; the birth of Adam's seed in corruption is a penal infliction for his disobedience. All who were represented in Christ live; all who were represented in Adam die. All who were in Christ legally lived in him, when he by his consummate obedience entitled himself and them to the reward of the highest life—confirmed holiness and bliss. All who were in Adam legally died in him, when he, by his inexcusable disobedience, subjected himself and them to the deepest curse—confirmed corruption and woe. Born by a supernatural generation into the kingdom of grace, all who were in Christ live

spiritually and corporeally, by a resurrection from the death of sin and the dust of the grave; and live, as invested with a right and title to supreme and everlasting felicity. Born by a natural generation into the kingdom of Satan, all who were in Adam are dead spiritually and die corporeally; brought forth in sin, sinking into the agony of dissolution and the rottenness of the tomb, and made liable to death eternal which consigns soul and body to the pains of hell for ever. All who were in Adam die; all who were in Christ live. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin"; but "they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." "For, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." The analogy is perfect between the first and second Adams and their respective seeds, so far as the operation of the principle of federal representation is concerned; the modes of its application in the two cases, and the results attained, were as different as are mere grace and recovering mercy, as legal and priestly representation, as are justification and condemnation, as life and death, heaven and hell.

II. The import of the federal theology, according to the Calvinistic conception of it—and it is the scriptural conception—having been thus briefly exhibited, let us pass on to consider its regulative influence: first, upon the doctrines of natural religion—the religion of law; secondly, upon those of supernatural religion—the religion of redeeming grace.

1. It makes short work with non-Calvinistic hypotheses in regard to the relation of the race to Adam, and the effect exerted upon them by his sin.

It sweeps all standing ground from the Pelagian doctrine. The wild and monstrous dream that men are born destitute of moral principle and of impulses to moral action, and that they electively determine their character as sinful by virtue of an imitative disposition, is at once dissipated in the light of a doctrine which affirms the imputation of guilt to the race and their condemnation in God's court antecedently to their conscious existence—the previous passage of a just legal sentence, which, upon judicial

grounds, necessitates their birth in corruption. They are born dead in trespasses and sins, because the death-sentence of the divine law had already been pronounced upon them.

It shows the utter incompetency of the Arminian theory. In that theory, the terms, *covenant*, *federal*, *representative*, are all, it is true, employed, but employed abusively. What is meant is, that Adam was the parental representative of his posterity. The consequences of his sin are entailed upon them, just as those of the sins of ordinary parents are visited upon their children. The theory, according to the express statement of Richard Watson, in his *Theological Institutes*, corresponds with that of Dr. Isaac Watts.¹ The feature which distinguishes Adam's influence from that of parents in general is, that, as he was the first parent, the results of his sin are inflicted upon the whole family of mankind. This theory, whatever may be the language it speaks, does not include the principle of federal representation. There are two elements entering essentially into the operation of that principle, which the theory discards. The first is, that those who are represented do the very acts of their representative—do them really, but not subjectively and consciously; do them legally and representatively. In this sense, the descendants of Adam committed his first sin. This the federal theology affirms, and this the Arminian theory denies. The second element is, that the very sentence which is pronounced upon the representative is pronounced upon his constituents. The sentence of condemnation which was, in God's court, passed upon Adam, was at the same time passed upon his posterity. This also the federal theology affirms, and this also the Arminian theory denies. The rejection of these elements of the federal system by this theory, were it not explicitly made,² can easily be shown to result logically from the analogy which it maintains between the case of Adam and that of ordinary parents. For it is very certain that children do not perform the very acts of their parents; and it is equally certain that they are not subject to the very sentences which may have been passed upon their parents for their crimes. No child

¹ Vol. ii., Part ii., Chap. xviii., p. 53.

² Watson, *Theo. Inst.*, Vol. II., Part II., p. 53.

is sentenced to death because his father was. He is not hanged because his father came to the gallows. The distinction cannot be overlooked between the penal infliction of the retributive consequences of the representative sin of Adam upon his federal constituents and the visitation of calamities upon children because of the offences of their parents. It deserves to be considered, too, that there are no results flowing to their children from the acts of godly parents which illustrate, by analogy, the consequences accruing to his seed from the obedience and justification of Christ. The federal and parental constitutions are different things. In short, the federal theology, embracing the principle of strict legal representation, being once established, the Arminian theory falls to the ground.

2. The federal theology, as embodying in itself the principle of federal representation, shows to be baseless, at least to be useless and superfluous, those metaphysical theories propounded by Calvinistic divines, which attempt to explain the responsibility of the race for the first sin upon other grounds than those of legal representation and the imputation of another's guilt, and maintain the position that they are accountable for that sin by the fact that it was theirs in the very same sense in which it was Adam's. They did not commit it legally and representatively in him as their federal head, but in the exercise of their own proper agency. Into this class fall the Realistic theory of generic unity, the theory of Numerical Identity, advocated by Dr. Baird and Dr. Shedd, and President Edwards's theory that God, by a naked exercise of sovereignty, constituted Adam and his posterity the same agent, and that he effects the sameness by successive acts of creative power. He creates each of the race what Adam was, and as doing what Adam did. They are created one and the same. The theory is part and parcel of his philosophical doctrine of Continuous Creation.

These theories are reducible to unity upon a common principle, namely, the justice of imputing to one the guilt of an act which he has performed strictly in his own proper, subjective capacity. But this is exclusive of the principle upon which the justice is affirmed of imputing to one the guilt of an act which is strictly

and properly another's, and which is only one's own in the sense that he performed it legally and representatively in that other. It is manifest that these two principles cannot be applied to one and the same act. If the guilt of Adam's sin be imputed to his posterity because it was their own subjectively, it cannot be also imputed to them because it was theirs representatively. And the contrary supposition must be equally true—if it be imputed to them because it was theirs representatively, it cannot be imputed to them because it was theirs subjectively. Both cannot be, one or the other must be, true. If, therefore, the principle of federal representation determined the relation of Adam's guilt to the race, the theories under consideration are excluded. The federal theology accounts sufficiently for the facts of the case. It is not intended to deny that the community of nature between Adam and his posterity may have rendered it fit and proper that he should be the person to represent them, that the natural relation grounded the propriety of the federal. What is affirmed is, that as he was appointed their legal representative, they became implicated in his guilt by virtue of their relation to him in that capacity: it was the federal relation which grounded the imputation of guilt.

3. The principles of the federal theology also rule out as inadequate, if not unnecessary, the theory of Propagation; for, even supposing that it explains the transmission of corruption, it gives no account of the derivation of federal guilt. The attempt is made to harmonise the two by the view, that corruption is propagated through the parental channel and guilt derived through the federal. To my mind, the reconciliation is hopeless, and the reduction incompetent. For, if corruption descend by propagation, it is plain that guilt is imputed to each descendant of Adam, in consequence of his own subjective depravity. It is his own inherent corruption and his own personal guilt. Where, then, is the necessity of supposing the descent of federal guilt? And then, further, what originally grounded the justice of the propagation? To these questions the theory, either as modified or unmodified, furnishes no answer. The theory of Placæus was really that of Propagation. The conscious corruption of the

descendants of Adam grounds the imputation of their own, and not another's, guilt to them. The extraordinary hypothesis of the mediate imputation of Adam's guilt was an afterthought, and its meaning is only conceivable on the supposition that each man, by his own conscious, voluntary acts, approves and—so to speak—endorses Adam's sin, and the imputation of the guilt of that sin is thus mediated through his own conscious sins—a supposition which is destroyed by the simple consideration that, according to it, notwithstanding the existence of original sin in the infant, there would be no imputation of Adam's guilt until the period of conscious, voluntary agency be reached. The federal theology disposes of this whole theory, with its troop of difficulties, by affirming the antenatal imputation of Adam's guilt. Corruption is the judicial result of an antecedent imputation to the race of the guilt which they representatively contracted in Adam. No satisfactory account can be furnished of either the propagation or the existence of corruption, except upon the supposition of such an imputation.

4. There is still another theory which, with profound respect for the eminent persons, by whom it has been supported, I am constrained to say is ruled out by the principle of federal representation. As it maintains that federal guilt and subjective depravity so concur in the same concrete and inseparable experience that neither is in order to the other, it may, for the sake of convenience,* be styled the theory of Concurrence.

There are two main aspects of this theory—a negative, in which objections are urged against the doctrine of Immediate Imputation; a positive, in which the attempt is made to show that the imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity is neither mediate, as conditioned by their subjective depravity, nor immediate as antecedent to that depravity; but that men are born in a condition in which depravity and the imputation of guilt coexist as facts in one concrete whole, there being no relation of production between them. There is not room enough for anything like a thorough discussion of these points. Only a brief criticism of the theory will be offered, in which it will be laid alongside of the line and plummet of the principle of representation, and judged through that comparison.

First, it is objected that the doctrine of Immediate Imputation supposes the existence, if only for an instant, of each descendant of Adam, in personal innocence, before the imputation to him of the guilt of the first sin; and that, consequently, such imputation is causeless, gratuitous, arbitrary. The objection is easily discharged. According to the federal theology, every man, before his earthly history begins, had a legal and representative existence in Adam, and so in him really performed representative acts which really entailed legal consequences. In this sense, every man really sinned in Adam, and fell with him in his first transgression. And, in this sense, every man was condemned in Adam, in the moment of Adam's condemnation. The guilt of the first sin, which was really, although not subjectively and consciously, his sin—which was his sin by virtue of the representative relation he sustained to it, was imputed to him, in God's court, as the ground of his condemnation. It follows that every man comes into the world already condemned on the ground of imputed guilt. This the doctrine of Immediate Imputation has for the very burden of its teaching; this, precisely this, it was formulated to enforce. How, then, can it suppose the subsequent existence in innocence, even for one instant, of any soul of man? Why, it is this doctrine, and this alone, which accounts for the beginning of earthly existence in inherent corruption. It does this by showing that every man had, before birth, lost his innocence, and was condemned, and that therefore no man could, consistently with divine justice, be brought into earthly existence in innocence. The previous sentence supposed guilt antecedently to birth, and therefore necessitated birth in corruption. Every descendant of Adam was guilty *before* birth, and is therefore guilty and inherently corrupt *at* birth. Further, the theory under consideration admits the existence of guilt as well as inherent corruption at the moment of birth. Now, how will it account for guilt? It cannot say that it is the result of propagated corruption, for it expressly denies that corruption is in order to guilt. It cannot say that the infant contracts it, for it must concede that the infant cannot perform any voluntary act which would incur guilt. How, then, will it account for the presence of guilt? It

cannot, except upon the ground that it was imputed antecedently to birth; and that is the position which it was framed to deny. But that being denied, its charge against the doctrine of Immediate Imputation of implying a gratuitous imputation of guilt recoils upon itself. It furnishes no explanation of the presence of guilt at birth. The doctrine objected to does furnish one, and it is one which springs from the principles of the federal theology.

In the second place, let us briefly contemplate the positive element in this theory, which is, that neither does guilt ground depravity, nor depravity ground guilt, but that they concur as co-ordinate facts in one concrete and undivided condition of the soul. In justification of this position reference has been made to what is pronounced the analagous case of Adam. As in his case depravity and guilt came together without any causal relation between them, so it is with us. Now, then, the question arises, How was it with Adam? We may consider his case either in respect to the relation between his guilt and his act of sin, or between his guilt and his state of depravity. Take the former relation. It is perfectly clear that Adam's first act of sin was in order to the first imputation of guilt to him. Otherwise, guilt was causelessly and arbitrarily imputed to him. Guilt cannot be justly imputed where there has been no precedent wrong-doing. If then our case be analagous to Adam's, a conscious act of sin must precede and ground our guilt; and the theory of Placeus is admitted. But how could that be possible in the case of an infant incapable of conscious acts of sin? Let us take the latter relation—that of Adam's guilt to his state of depravity. It is evident that that state was a penal consequence of the guilt contracted by his first sinful act. He sinned; God charged the guilt of that sin upon him; and then punished him by the withdrawal from him of his grace, which necessarily sunk him into confirmed depravity. Here the imputation of guilt grounded the settled condition of corruption. Now, if our case be like Adam's, in this regard, the imputation of guilt grounds our state of depravity; and the doctrine of Immediate Imputation is admitted. If, therefore, our case be considered analagous to Adam's in the first aspect, the result is the doctrine of Mediate Imputation; if in the

latter, that of Immediate Imputation. If this analogy be pressed in favor of the theory in hand, the election must be made between these alternative doctrines. There is no possibility of a middle supposition. In fine, it is clear that depravity must ground guilt, or guilt depravity. If depravity does not ground guilt, why are we held guilty? If guilt does not ground depravity, how came we to be born depraved? The federal theology presents the fact of "immediate and antecedent imputation" as the only key to these difficulties. In Adam we representatively committed the first sinful act. That grounded the imputation of guilt to us. That in turn grounds our inherent depravity, and that again induces conscious acts of depravity, and they ground the imputation of conscious guilt. First, the representative act of the first sin; secondly, representative guilt resulting from it; thirdly, the state of inherent depravity, beginning at birth, as the judicial consequence of the imputation of that guilt; fourthly, actual transgressions; fifthly, conscious, personal guilt—that is the order enforced by the principle of federal representation as the genius of the federal theology.

5. The regulative influence of the federal theology is in nothing more signally manifested than in the fact, that it affords the only tolerable solution of the profound and awful mysteries which hang over the moral history of the race. We are born in sin; we begin our earthly career in spiritual death, disabled for the performance of any holy act, and bound, apart from God's redeeming grace, by a fatal necessity of sinning; I say not, of committing this or that particular sin, but of sinning. We are required to render a perfect obedience to the divine law which we have no ability to yield; failing that, we are commanded to exercise faith in Christ which we have in ourselves no power to put forth; we cannot deliver ourselves from this mournful captivity to the law of sin and death, we are bound in affliction and iron: and still we are justly held responsible for this condition, are righteously condemnably for its existence and are liable, on account of it, to the eternal pains of hell. Is it any wonder that reason reels and staggers under the apparent contradictions of the case? that she fumbles like the blind and feels after some guiding hand? Now,

if this were our original state, if thus we were at first created, if our history had no other beginning than one thus conditioned, the blackness of darkness would settle down upon the problem. But reason cannot be satisfied by such a supposition. She craves and demands another. Kant's hypothesis of an extra-temporal condition, and Julius Müller's and Edward Beecher's, of an ante-mundane existence, in which each individual determined his destiny by a free self-decision, attest at once her anxiety and her inability to escape from the gigantic difficulty. Scripture, philosophy, and consciousness being her guides, she is estopped from taking that road for deliverance. Here the word of God comes to our help, and darts a morning beam into the deep midnight of the ease. It informs us that our history began not at our birth but at the creation of Adam, not in the place of our nativity, but in Paradise. In our first parent, appointed of God our head and representative, we had our legal probation under a covenant, which conditioned upon obedience for a limited time the attainment of justification and adoption—of indefectible holiness and bliss. In him we had freedom of will to elect the path of rectitude and to stand in integrity, in him we were endowed with amply sufficient grace to meet all the requirements of the trial. But he sinned and we sinned in him. He fell and we fell with him. We wilfully threw away our ability to render obedience to God, and, passing under the curse of a broken law, sunk into our present condition of helpless inability as the punishment of our foul and inexcusable revolt. This is the solution which the federal theology affords of the mysteries which enshroud our moral state. Our inability is not original; it is penal. Discard this solution furnished by the Oracles of God, and we shall find that every other oracle is as dumb as the Theban Sphinx. Even this explanation does not dispel all the difficulties which emerge when we attempt to think the case, but it is certainly more satisfactory than any which reason can furnish; while faith bows reverently at the shrine of Inspiration and thankfully accepts the measure of light which it gives.

6. Still further, the federal theology exerts a regulative influence in determining the question of the salvability of the race,

apart from the remedial provisions of the gospel. It definitely reveals the doctrine, that God has never dealt with human beings except through covenant methods, and that justification has never been made possible to man save through the vicarious obedience of a federal head. How then can a sinner be justified? The covenant of works, as a covenant of life, is shattered, and naught issues from its ruins but the thunder of its penalty prelude to the trump of doom. Its federal head was himself condemned, and he who would now turn to it for hope presents the mournful spectacle of a dying man seeking life from Adam's grave. There is no hope but through the vicarious obedience of the second Adam, which grounds the bestowal of the blessings that are promised to faith by another and better covenant.

And then, also, the solemn question springs up and challenges an answer, How can the heathen be saved? They must be brought into relation to a federal head who, as their sponsor at the divine bar, can answer for them; who having impetrated their salvation, can sue out its application to them. The first Adam cannot avail them. He is a dead and buried representative, nor can his tomb be rent except by another representative who cries at the gates of Death's empire: I am the resurrection and the life. But they know not the second Adam. There is no covenant of life with which they are brought into contact. Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, they are without Christ, and therefore without God and without hope. How loud, how urgent, how imperative the call to the Christian Church to evangelise a world lying in wickedness and in the region and shadow of death! The federal theology settles the question of the salvability of the heathen. It enforces, in no uncertain tones, the doctrine that there is no salvation for them except through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the glorious representative of sinners in the eternal covenant of redemption.

Having indicated, in part, the regulative influence, of the federal theology upon the doctrines of Natural Religion, I proceed, as necessity requires, very briefly to exhibit the same upon those of Supernatural Religion or, what is the same thing, the gospel scheme.

Apart from the conception of the federal system which has been imperfectly sketched in the preceding remarks, no Calvinist can state the successive steps in the application of the benefits of redemption, without plunging himself into inextricable perplexities. Just look for a moment at some of the difficulties attending such an attempt. So far as we can see, it might have pleased God to bring the elect seed of Christ into earthly existence regenerated, to render their first and second birth coincident. This does not appear to be his ordinary method of procedure. They come into this world unregenerate, and at God's appointed time they are regenerated by the creative power of the Holy Ghost. He views them lying in their blood in the field of rebellion and bids them, live! But whatever supposition may be made as to this matter, it is the doctrine of the Calvinist that regeneration, in the order of nature at least, precedes justification. Now if it be maintained that there was no justification previous to regeneration, it would follow that God confers the blessing of life, while, in every sense, he denounces the curse of death; that the principle of holiness is infused into the soul while, in every sense, it lies under the penalty of a condemning law; that it lives spiritually while legally dead, and that it is united by regenerating grace to Christ the source of life, while yet the death-sentence is, in no sense, removed. If it be said, that the difficulty is met by the consideration that regeneration and justification take place synchronously, it is obvious to reply, that regeneration may be, and no doubt sometimes is, effected in the case of infants, the difference in time being palpable between their new birth and their actual justification; and that in the case of adult elect sinners, their regeneration, in the order of production, is a condition precedent to their actual justification, so that without its occurrence that justification could not be effected. The very question is, how regeneration can be effected *in order to* justification; how a sinner can be renewed in holiness before the removal of guilt and his deliverance from the curse.

These difficulties press still more heavily upon those who, rejecting the doctrine of an immediate imputation of Christ's righteousness and an antecedent justification *in foro divino*, con-

tend that repentance, in the narrow sense of penitence, precedes actual justification. On that supposition, as it is inconceivable that a penitent soul could be destitute of the divine favor which implies pardon, and yet exercises penitence as a condition precedent to justification through which alone pardon is actually imparted, it must be regarded as at one and the same time actually pardoned and actually unpardoned; which is a contradiction.

It is evident that a sinner cannot be regenerated and perform holy acts, until in some sense his guilt is removed and his obligation to punishment remitted. In a word, he must be pardoned before he can be renewed and exert holy energies,—not consciously pardoned, but pardoned representatively in Christ. Those who oppose this view are shut up to the necessity of holding, that an unpardoned, that is, a condemned, sinner is the recipient of the transcendent blessing of regeneration; that he then, as still unpardoned, puts forth the holy exercise of faith, and is then for the first time pardoned and invested with a right to life.

These are insuperable difficulties to those who discard the doctrine of a virtual or representative justification of Christ's seed and an "antecedent and immediate imputation" of his righteousness to them, conditioning, consistently with the divine perfections and honor, the actual application to them of the purchased benefits of redemption. To those who hold that doctrine these difficulties do not exist. According to it, the order in which the great case is developed may be thus compendiously stated: first, Christ the representative of the elect, having fulfilled the conditions of the covenant which were required of him, was justified, and they were implicitly justified in him—that is, they were, in mass, pardoned and invested with a right to indefectible life in him, by virtue of a judicial sentence passed in the divine court; secondly, at God's appointed time, during the period of the earthly history of each individual of them, his representative and High Priest, interceding for him in the heavens, sues out the grace of the Holy Spirit to be actually bestowed upon him, and pardon to be actually imparted to him; thirdly, God, consistently with his infinite justice and holiness, now comes through the Holy Spirit into personal contact with the sinner, actually and

consciously condemned and unregenerate, but regarded as virtually and representatively justified—pardoned and accepted in Christ his head; convinces him of his sin and misery, moves him to pray for mercy, enlightens him in the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour from sin, death, and hell, regenerates him and thus unites him vitally and spiritually to his federal head; fourthly, the sinner now born again consciously exercises, as the first function of spiritual life, faith in Christ, and is actually justified in the court of conscience. The pardon which had been impetrated and sued out for him is now actually imparted to him, and he is actually and formally invested with a title in Christ to eternal life. The adoption, sanctification, and glorification of the justified man follow as constituent elements of the reward promised to his federal head, and as integral parts of the salvation purchased by his blood. The *ordo salutis* is clearly settled by a strict construction of the federal scheme.

A full discussion of this subject would necessitate a detailed exposition of the bearing of the federal theology upon the particular doctrines of the gospel scheme. But of this time will not admit. All that can now be done is in a few words to indicate its influence upon those elements of Calvinism, through which it comes into open conflict with other systems of theology.

Observe its bearing upon the doctrine of Election. It must be admitted that, in the order of thought, the election of those to be redeemed preceded the formation of the covenant contemplating their redemption, and the appointment of their federal head. But the fact, definitely revealed in the Scriptures, that the Father gave the elect to the Son as federal head, to be represented and redeemed by him, fixes the scope of the electing decree, and determines it as unconditioned by anything in the elect themselves. That a definite number, chosen from the fallen mass of mankind, were given to the mediatorial head to be represented by him, is proved by the consideration, that if all had been given to him to be represented, as his federal obligations were perfectly fulfilled, all must be saved. But the fact is incontestable that all are not saved. It follows that all were not represented by the federal head, and that, therefore, all were not objects of the electing decree.

That the federal arrangement proves the electing decree to be unconditioned upon anything in the elect themselves, is evinced by the fact that the only condition upon which the impetration of salvation was suspended, was the meritorious obedience of the federal head himself; and that he was freely elected by the Father *in order to* the performance of that condition, and not because of any foresight of its fulfilment. The covenant itself and the appointment of the federal head himself were results, not the conditioning ground, of election. This settles the question of the unconditional nature of the electing purpose. If it was not conditioned upon the foresight of Christ's federal obedience, it most certainly was not upon the foreseen faith and good works of the elect.

Next, notice the bearing of the principle of representation upon the Extent of the Atonement. The doctrine of a Particular Atonement is necessitated by it. If Christ was really the legal representative of his seed, then, in accordance with the maxim already mentioned, what they did and suffered through him they themselves did and suffered. This must be allowed, or a strict construction of the federal system be abandoned. When, therefore, by his atoning sacrifice Christ rendered perfect satisfaction to divine justice, he paid their debt to law as a standard of justification, and they paid it in him, and are consequently pardoned and for ever absolved from the obligation to punishment. Now, if Christ's atoning obedience were vicariously rendered for all men, it would follow, from the demands of the representative principle, that all men having complied with the requirements of the law in him as their federal head would be pardoned and eternally discharged from obligation to punishment. Facts prove this to be untrue. The conclusion is inevitable, that all men were not represented by Christ in the accomplishment of atonement. It was the elect seed, given to him by the Father to be redeemed, who alone were represented by him when as a federal priest he offered himself an atoning sacrifice for sin. The truth is, that atonement made by a federal head and representative cannot, from the nature of the case, acquire merely possible, contingent, amissible benefits, but must secure results which are definite, uncontingent, inmut-

able. Those must be pardoned and saved for whom he acts. Such results do not terminate on all men. Therefore, all were not represented in Christ's atoning obedience.

The determining influence of the federal theology is also obvious upon the doctrine of Vocation. The elect seed of Christ who were represented by him in the impetration of redemption must in time be called into spiritual and living union with him as their head, or his obedience unto death would prove an utter failure. But they are in themselves spiritually dead, in consequence of the breach of the covenant of works by their first representative. The vocation must, therefore, of necessity, be accomplished by almighty and creative power. Such power is efficacious and irresistible. Nothing, before it is created, can resist the power which calls it into existence. The dead cannot resist the power that raises them. This power which calls the elect from spiritual death into vital union with their federal head is Grace. The doctrine of efficacious, irresistible grace is thus briefly but conclusively established by the requirements of the federal system.

It is scarcely requisite to remark, that the doctrine of the Final Perseverance of the Saints is a necessary inference from the principles of the federal theology. The obedience which Christ, as the representative of his elect seed, rendered to the law is perfect; it is finished. The eye of justice, the scrutiny of Omniscience, detect in it no blemish. It has been examined at the divine bar and judicially pronounced satisfactory. It cannot be invalidated; there is no contingency of failure in its results. But Christ's seed representatively rendered that obedience in him. It therefore grounds, with absolute certainty, their everlasting holiness and happiness, their complete and indefectible life. The federal representative is in glory; the federal constituency must also be glorified. If not, the principle of representation is a figment, and the covenant of redemption breaks down amidst the jeers of hell.

A few remarks will be added in regard to the results achieved by the employment of the principle of federal representation, and this discussion, too long for the occasion, but too short for the subject, will be brought to a close.

The enthronement of Grace is secured. Neither the federal nor the representative principle can be conceived as original in

the moral government of God: neither springs from the essential relations of creatures to the Creator, of subjects to the divine Ruler. These principles are not one and the same. For aught we know, it might have pleased God, without collecting our race into legal unity, to have entered into a covenant with each individual, promising him justification upon the condition of an obedience limited as to time. This would have been the free and spontaneous suggestion of his grace. But this he did not destine to be historically realised. He grouped the race, appointed for it a federal head and representative, and suspended its confirmation in holiness and happiness upon the easy performance by him, thoroughly qualified for it as he was, of a temporary obedience. This was grace upon grace—rich, abounding, exuberant grace; and had the reward of the first covenant been attained, a justified world, as its generations unmowed by death rolled on to ever-multiplying myriads, would have poured out a doxology, continually swelling in volume, at the throne of free and sovereign grace.

But the first representative of the race fell from a paradise of innocence and bliss, and dragged it down with him into an abyss of ruin relieved by no gleam of hope. Truth thundered, the soul that sinneth it shall die; justice demanded eternal punishment; law brandished the awful sword of its penalty; and the holy universe looked on to see the mass of rebels swept by the arm of power, like the fallen angels, into the open mouth of hell. But grace failed not in the dreadful emergency. No longer contemplating the case of the merely undeserving, it assumed the lovelier aspect of mercy—pitiful, recovering, redeeming mercy—commiserating the ill-deserving, the miserable, the lost. When there was no eye to pity and no arm to save, it provided another representative, chosen from among the persons of the ever-blessed Godhead, and allied to man by Adamic blood—a divine-human representative, who undertook the desperate case of the seed of Abraham, and for them satisfied the law in life and in death, brought in everlasting righteousness, conquered sin and Satan, the grave and hell, gained the paradise of God, and won imperishable life. Grace illustrated in the sinner's triumphant and ascended representative, shines forth with new and more

splendid effulgence, and is enthroned amidst the acclamations of a redeemed and glorified Church. Grace! grace! will be alike the key-note and the refrain of the new and everlasting song.

The enthronement of Justice and Law is secured. It was impossible that infinite justice, the ultimate basis of the divine government, or an infinite law, the formal expression of that awful and venerable attribute, should ever be compromised or relaxed. Upon the supposition that the guilty and unholy were to be restored to the favor of God, the problem of the reconciliation of that fact with the inexorable demands of those fundamental elements of moral rule, was suspended for solution upon the employment of the principle of federal representation. Infinite wisdom proposed that method of harmonising the claims of justice and law on the one hand, with those of grace and mercy on the other. The harmony was accomplished in the person and work of the representative of sinners, who, on the eternal throne, responded to his Father's call, saying, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God: who incarnated himself, was made under the law, fulfilled all its requirements, preceptive and penal, burst the bands of the grave, was published to the universe as the justified substitute of his seed, and ascended to heaven, recognised and hailed as the reconciler of justice and grace, of condemning law and pardoning mercy. Jesus ascends the throne, on which these attributes are equally glorified, by steps tintured with representative blood. And as justice and law must be felt in unrelaxed rigor by all who reject the principle of representation, and so the enemies of Christ and his people be overthrown; as all whose salvation is grounded in the operation of that principle will attain an immutable security of life, the triumphant Church will strike her cymbals, and chant the blended praises of avenging justice and saving grace—"the song of Moses and the Lamb."

Finally, the glorious and eternal exaltation of Jesus is secured. The peoples of this world celebrate the exploits of the heroes who stood in the deadly breach and were willing to sacrifice their lives for their native lands. Let them hail them as deliverers and saviours. Jesus immeasurably transcends them all. The representative and champion of his Father's honor, of justice and law,

of grace and mercy, of ruined, undone, despairing sinners, tried but undismayed, met all his stupendous obligations, discharged the momentous trusts reposed in him, and returns a victor to the heavenly city from fields of bloody conflict with the powers of earth and the columns of hell. It was fit that he—the hero of heroes—should be lifted to an unparalleled exaltation. Attended by ten thousands of his holy ones, and making an open show of his captive foes, he rises from the theatre of battle to the throne of triumph. Every attribute of God demands his exaltation, the other persons of the Trinity welcome him to his merited honors, the angelic world cast their crowns before him, and the vast congregation of ransomed human beings breaks like a heaving ocean into the “multitudinous laughter” of joy and the thunders of unending praise. The hand, which once representing the impotence of guilt, was nailed to the tree, wields a sceptre which is the badge of irresistible dominion, and upon the head which, formerly gathering upon itself the accumulated shame of his people’s sins, was dishonored by a crown of platted thorns, blazes the manifold lustre of an imperial diadem which is the symbol of universal sway. And if the numberless worlds of the physical system, which seem to the eye of man to sweep through the infinity of space, be tenanted by intelligent populations, the music of the rolling spheres will be accompanied by the psalmody of redemption, and the boundless universe will burst into an ascription of glory to the Lamb that was slain. The insignia of the Representative Economy will be indelibly impressed upon the throne on which Jesus sits, the recipient of universal and perennial honor. “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels, round about the throne, and the living creatures and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, honor, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.”