

Prof. W. L. Sears

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AND ITS VICINITY.*

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REVIEW.

Essays and Dissertations in Biblical Literature. By a Society of Clergymen. Vol. I. Containing chiefly translations of the works of German critics. New York. G. & C. & H. Carvill, 1829. Pp. 567, 8vo.

The importance of biblical literature is gradually rising to its appropriate value in the estimation of many of our clergymen. To those whose acquirements and taste have led them to feel a deep interest in the progress of theological literature in our country, and whose biblical studies have made them sensible of the want of more ample means for extending their researches, the attention recently awakened to this subject cannot fail to be highly gratifying. For deep and original investigation in this productive field our country has hitherto laboured under peculiar disadvantages, which, although diminished by the productions of every passing year, must long continue to be felt. Our public libraries are not stored with ancient manuscripts, accumulated by the contributions and collections of successive centuries; our geographical location cuts us off from many important facilities of acquiring a radical knowledge of oriental languages, literature, and cus-

REVIEW

Of an Article in the June number of the Christian Spectator, entitled, "Inquiries respecting the Doctrine of Imputation."

In our number for January last, we presented our readers with a condensed view of the early history of Pelagianism. In the course of that article, it fell in our way to express our belief in the doctrine of imputation, our conviction of its importance, and of its being generally received among orthodox Christians. This doctrine, our readers are aware, has long been, nominally at least, rejected by many of our New England brethren. Without much argument on the subject, it has been discarded as intrinsically absurd; and it has not unfrequently been presented as an unanswerable argument against other doctrines, that they lead to all the absurdities of this exploded dogma. We have long been convinced, that the leading objections to this doctrine, arose from an entire, and to us, an unaccountable misapprehension of its nature as held among Calvinists. We, therefore, thought it proper, and adapted to remove prejudices, to state the common views on this subject, that our brethren might see that they did not involve the absurdities which they imagined. Unfortunately, as far as the author of the article under review is concerned, our object has not been answered. The writer, who signs himself *A Protestant*, is evidently much dissatisfied with our opinions. His object, in his communication to the Spectator, is to impugn several of our statements, and to present his difficulties with regard to the doctrine itself. To our surprise, these difficulties are almost all founded on the very misapprehension which it was our object to correct. Although our readers, we think, will sympathize with us in our regret at many of the statements of this author, and feel hurt that he should have allowed himself to make the unguarded imputations contained in his piece, we are not sorry that we are called upon, by this direct appeal, to state more fully our views on this subject, and the grounds on which they rest.

Before proceeding to the doctrine of imputation and of the protestant's difficulties, there are one or two subjects on

which we would make a passing remark. This writer attributes to us great subserviency to the opinions of the fathers. Such expressions as the following clearly convey this imputation. "Can any one inform me to what age this 'orthodoxy' belongs; and where the history of it is to be found among the fathers whose authority is so much relied on by this historian?" Page 340. "Can the historian honestly say, with all his attachment to the fathers, &c." "Last of all, I would particularly request, if any writer should favour me with an answer to these inquiries, that *reasons*, and not *names*, may be given in support of his statements. If it be suggested that none but a heretic could ask such questions, I would reply, that there are minds in our country which are not satisfied that calling hard names is argument; or that the *argumentum ad invidiam* is the happiest weapon which a meek and humble Christian can use. Men are apt to suspect that such arguments would not be employed, if better ones were at hand in their stead. I only add that I am *A Protestant*." And so are we, however unworthy that gentleman may think us of the title. We would not knowingly call any man master upon earth. We profess to believe, with him, that the Bible is the religion of protestants; and that it matters little what men have taught, if the word of God does not support their doctrines. As we agree with him in these leading principles, we hope that he will agree with us in certain others. While we hold that the opinions of men are of no authority as to matters of faith, we, at the same time, believe that much respect is due to uniform opinions of the people of God; that there is a strong presumption in favour of any doctrine being taught in the Bible, if the great body of the pious readers of the Bible have from the beginning believed and loved it. We are free to confess, that it would startle us to hear, that there was no antecedent probability that the doctrines of the deity of Christ, atonement, native depravity, are really taught in the word of God, if it can be made to appear that the church, in all ages, has believed these doctrines. And we think that a man places himself in a very unenviable situation, who undertakes to prove to the men of his generation, that the great body of the good and pious before him, were utterly mistaken, and that he alone is right. Here is a phenomenon, which any man who assumes this position is bound at the outset to account for, that the Bible, a plain book, as protestants call it, should have been utterly misunderstood

for more than a thousand years, by its most careful and competent readers. It will not meet this case, to tell us, that this man or that man has held this or that absurdity; or that whole ages or communities of men, who neither read nor loved the scriptures, believed this or that heresy. This is not the question. It is simply this, is it not probable that what the vast majority of the most competent readers of a plain book, take to be its plain meaning, really is its meaning? We take it for granted, that the protestant would answer this question in the affirmative; and that, if arguing with Unitarians, he would not scruple to appeal to the fact, that the unprejudiced and pious en masse of every age have understood the Bible as teaching the divinity of Christ, as a presumptive argument in its favour. We suspect that he would go further, and that in giving the exposition of any passage he would fortify his own conclusions, by stating that he did not stand alone, but that others of the accurate and the learned had arrived at the same results. Now we think that a man who would do this, ought not to sneer at us on this very account. We know that it is easy to ring the changes, on want of independence, subserviency to the fathers, slavery to a system, and so on, but what effect does all this produce? It may excite prejudice, and lead the superficial to join in a sneer against men whom they suppose to a pitiable extent inferior to themselves; but does it convince any body? Does it weaken the legitimate force of the argument from the concurrence of the pious in any doctrine? Does it produce any favourable impression on that class of readers whose approbation a writer should value?

We say, then, that the opinion of the church is entitled to respect, if for no other reason, at least as a presumptive argument for any doctrine, in favour of which this concurrent testimony can be cited. Whether the church has, with any important uniformity, held the doctrine of imputation, is a mere question of fact, and must be decided accordingly. If it can be fairly proved, let it pass for what it is worth. It binds no man's conscience; yet the protestant himself would hardly say, that it was to him or others a matter of indifference. He greatly mistakes if he supposes that the opinion of a man who lived a thousand years ago, has any more weight with us than that of an equally pious and able man who may be still living. His telling us, therefore, that some of

the men, who are called fathers, held sundry very extravagant opinions, is really saying very little in answer to the argument from the consent of the good and great as to the plain meaning of a plain book. We are not now assuming the fact, that the church has, with perfect unanimity, gathered the doctrine of imputation from the word of God; but exhibiting the ground and nature of the respect due to the uniform opinion of God's people.

There is another point of view in which, we presume, the protestant will agree with us in thinking this opinion entitled to respect. Truth and piety are intimately related. A man's moral and religious opinions are the expression of his moral and religious feelings. Hence there are certain opinions which we view with abhorrence, because they express the greatest depravity. Now we say, and the protestant doubtless will join us in saying, that it is no very desirable thing for a man to throw himself out of communion with the great body of the pious in every age, and place himself in communion of language and opinion with the opposers of vital godliness. We think that any man, who had any proper sense of the deceitfulness of his own heart, the weakness of his understanding, and of the vital connexion between truth and piety, would hesitate long before he avowed himself opposed to the views which have for ages been found in connexion with true religion, and become the advocate of doctrines which the opposers of piety have been the foremost in defending.

These are mainly the grounds on which our respect for the opinions of the church rest, and these remarks show the extent of that respect. So far the protestant would go with us; further we have not gone. If we have cited the concurrent opinion of the church improperly; if we have supposed the great body of the people of God to have believed, what they did not believe—let the protestant set us right, and we shall be thankful. But do not let him join men, with whom he would scorn to be associated, in running over the common places of free inquiry, minds that think, &c. &c.

As word as to the argumentum ad invidiam. We are of the number of those who agree with this writer in thinking that "this is not the happiest weapon which a meek and lowly Christian can use," nay, that it is utterly unworthy of his character to use it at all. We think, too, that the charge

of having used it should not be lightly made. Unless we are mistaken as to the nature of this argument, the charge, in the present instance, is unfounded. We understand an argumentum ad invidiam to be one, which is designed, not to prove the incorrectness of any opinion, but to cast unmerited odium upon those who hold it. Such was not the design of the article to which the protestant objects. Every one knows, that within a few years, there has been more or less discussion in this country respecting sin and grace. We thought it would be useful, to present our readers with a short historical view of the various controversies which have existed in the church on these subjects. We commenced with the earliest and one of the most important; and gave, to the best of our ability, an account of the Pelagian controversy. We called no man a Pelagian, and designed to prove no man such, and therefore made little application of the history to present discussions. So far as the modern opinions differ from the ancient, there was no ground for such application, and none such was intended. So far as they agree, it is no more an argumentum ad invidiam to exhibit the agreement, than it is to call Belsham a Socinian or Whitby an anti-Calvinist. If no man agrees with Pelagius in confining morality to acts of choice; in maintaining that men are not morally depraved, before they voluntarily violate a known law; and that God cannot prevent sin in a moral system, then is no man affected by the exhibition of the Pelagian system. But if there are those who assume this ground, and proclaim it, it does them no injustice to say that they do so. So long, however, as these brethren hold to a moral certainty that all men will sin the moment they become moral agents; that the first sin leads to entire moral depravity; and that an immediate influence of the Spirit is necessary in conversion, they differ from that system in these important points. Wherein they agree and wherein they differ, should be known in justice to them, as well as for the benefit of others. How far the assumption of the fundamental principles of a system has a tendency to lead to its thorough adoption, every man must judge for himself. For ourselves, we fear the worst. Because, we think consistency requires an advance, and because history informs us, that when men have taken the first step, they or their followers soon take the second. Now, we ask, what is there

invidious in this history of opinions, or in this expression of apprehension? apprehension of what? of injury to the cause of vital piety. Is there any sin in expressing this apprehension, when conscientiously entertained? Suppose we had gone further than we did, and exhibited, what we supposed our readers capable of observing, the exact points of agreement and disagreement between the two systems, would there have been the least injustice in such a proceeding? We think not, and therefore think the charge of using the argumentum ad invidiam out of place. Let us now request our author to review his own piece, and ask himself, what is its whole spirit and tendency, (we do not say design). Is it not to cast on us the odium of being opposed to free investigation, of "calling hard names for argument," of being held in bondage to a system, of relying on *names* instead of *reasons*; in short, of being anti-protestants? Would not a little reflection have prevented his casting this stone?

There is a sensitiveness about *some* of our New England brethren, that has often surprised us. If any one in this quarter ventures to question the tendency of their opinions, or express apprehension as to their results, all of love and catholicism that there is within them, is shocked at the suggestion, and we are borne down with the cry, "you are breaking the bonds of charity," "you argue ad invidiam," &c.; and yet these same brethren can find it in their hearts to say, that we are setting "in motion all the enemies of religion;"* that our doctrines (though known to be held by a decided majority of evangelical christendom) are exploded absurdities;† that we believe in physical depravity and physical regeneration; and teach, "that God first creates a wrong essence, and then creates a right one; first plunges into the fire and then pulls out again;"‡ (a misrepresentation as gross as the language is irreverent.) They do all this, without appearing to dream that there is aught in it to justify complaint, or to trouble the waters of peace. However, let this pass. We love peace, and shall try to promote it. Our

* Prof. Stuart's Examination of the Review of the A. E. Society, p. 93.

† Review of Harvey and Taylor on Human Depravity in the Christian Spectator.

‡ Fitch's Inquiry and Reply, p. 89.

readers will soon see that we need our full share of self-command and forbearance.

The Protestant quotes, on p. 339, the following passage from our former article. "Now we confess ourselves to be of the number of those who believe, whatever reproach it may bring upon us from a certain quarter, that if the doctrine of imputation be given up, the whole doctrine of original sin must be abandoned. And if this doctrine be relinquished, then the whole doctrine of redemption must fall; and what may then be left of christianity, they may contend for that will; but for ourselves, we shall be of opinion, that what remains will not be worth a serious struggle." He then proceeds, "Here then permit me to inquire, have men no sins of *their own* from which they need to be redeemed? Or is it true, as the historian's position seems plainly to imply, that the whole object of Christ's death was, to redeem men from a sin which is *not their own*? And is this sin, then, which (to use the writer's own words) is not 'strictly and properly *theirs*, for those not yet born could not perform an act;' (p. 90.) is this sin so much greater than all the sins that men have themselves committed, in their own persons, that the death of Christ, or the redemption wrought by him, is not even to be named as having respect to these transgressions, and nothing of christianity is left, unless you assume the position, that redeeming blood is designed simply to expiate *original* sin? Can any one inform me to what age this 'orthodoxy' belongs; and where the history of it is to be found among the fathers, whose authority is so much relied on by this historian?" Again; on p. 341, he quotes Rom. iv. 15, as an argument against imputation, "Where no law is, there is no transgression," and then inquires, "But how can this be, where there is not only *original* sin prior to all knowledge of law, but original sin so great as to absorb the whole of the redemption of Christ; so that the redemption is annulled, if we consider it as expiating the guilt of actual violations of known law, and there is nothing left in the gospel worth contending for."

We must now be permitted to take our turn as interrogators. We seriously, then, put it to that gentleman's conscience to say, whether he really believes that the conductors of this work, or our historian, which is the same thing, actually hold that "the whole object of Christ's death was,

to redeem men from a sin which is not their own," and has no reference to "actual violations of known law?" If he does, we can only express our astonishment at the readiness, with which he can believe his brethren capable of holding and advancing the most monstrous opinions, in the face of their open and repeated declarations of adherence to a confession, which notoriously teaches the very reverse. We cannot, however, think, that the writer, whoever he may be, seriously entertains this idea. Our complaint is, that he should have been so heedless as to seize on the first impression which an isolated passage made on his mind, and without stopping to inquire whether he apprehended its meaning aright, or whether his interpretation was at all consistent with the known opinions of the conductors of this work, should at once proceed to hold up and denounce this first and false impression as the "orthodoxy" of the Biblical Repository. The gentleman, on the slightest reflection, will perceive, that just so far as confidence is reposed in his discrimination and judgment, the readers of the Spectator will be led to believe that we hold, "that redeeming blood is designed simply to expiate original sin," "that the redemption is annulled if we consider it as expiating the guilt of actual violations of known law, and there is nothing left in the gospel worth contending for." He must know, too, that those who adopt this idea, on the faith of his assertion, must be filled with astonishment and contempt for men who, they suppose, hold this opinion; and moreover, that the Spectator will go into many hands, where a correction from us of this marvellous misapprehension can never come. He may hence judge how serious an injury may be done, in one inconsiderate moment, by ascribing, on utterly insufficient grounds, obnoxious opinions to his brethren. Let us now see what reason the gentleman has for this wonderful statement. We had ventured to agree with the Christian Spectator, No. 2, p. 349, that the doctrine of original sin could not be consistently held, if that of imputation were abandoned. And we had made bold to say, with president Edwards,*

* "It will follow, says Edwards, on our author's principles, (that is, on the denial of original sin, and the assertion of sufficient power to do our duty,) not only with respect to infants, but even *adult* persons, that redemption is *needless*, and Christ is dead in vain."—*On Original Sin*, vol. ii. p. 515.

that the rejection of the doctrine of original sin rendered redemption unnecessary. Why? Because actual sins need no redemption, as the author most amazingly supposes? No. But because, as Edwards supposed, and as we suppose, the salvation of men could have been effected without it, by merely preserving pure and unfallen children from sinning, and thus needing a Saviour. Had our author attempted to show that God could not do this; or that these doctrines are not thus intimately related, we should not have had a word to object as to the propriety of such a course, whatever we might have thought of his arguments. But that a paragraph, which expresses nothing more than he might find in any and every Calvinistic book he ever condescended to look into, should be so interpreted, as to make us teach an almost unheard of doctrine, is indeed passing strange. Why has he not discovered, and long ago denounced this palpable absurdity of Calvinism? for surely we have said nothing new upon the subject. We hope, indeed, that the readers of the Spectator will have discrimination enough to see, what that gentleman's rapidity of mind prevented his discovering, that the paragraph in question contains nothing but a common and very harmless opinion, which the majority of them, we trust, have heard from the nursery and pulpit from their earliest years. We shall not be expected to say much in reply to the "inquiry," "to what age this orthodoxy (making the death of Christ refer only to original sin) belongs?" As it is the poles apart from any doctrine which we have ever believed or taught, we feel no special interest in the investigation. We must, therefore, leave to the discoverer of the heresy the task of tracing its history. Our present concern is with the doctrine of imputation.

It has struck us as somewhat surprising, that while the protestant represents us as teaching a doctrine involving the greatest absurdities, the editors of the Spectator regard the matter in a very different light. They think we have renounced the old doctrine, and are now teaching one which is substantially their own. They say,

"We have inserted the above communication (the protestant's) at the particular request of a respected correspondent, whose familiarity with the subject entitles his inquiries to a serious consideration. We cannot but think, however, that the question respecting

the imputation of Adams's sin to his descendants, has become, in this country at least, chiefly a dispute about words. The historian, if we understand his statements, has abandoned the ground of Edwards and other standard writers, on this subject. He states, unequivocally, that Adam's 'first act of transgression,' was 'not *strictly* and *properly* that of his descendants, (for those not yet born could not perform an act) but interpretatively or by imputation.' P. 90. Now Edwards affirms the direct contrary. 'The sin of the apostacy is not theirs, merely because God imputes it to them, but it is *truly* and *properly* theirs, and on *that* ground God imputes it to them.'—*Orig. Sin*, p. 4, chap. 3. Stapfer too lays down the doctrine of imputation in the same way." Again; "We are glad likewise to see him proceed one step farther. He not only denies that we had any share in the *act*, but even in the guilt of Adam's first sin, in the ordinary acceptation of that term. He tells us, 'that the ill-desert of one man cannot be transferred to another;' that 'imputation does not imply a transfer of moral acts or *moral character*, but the opposite of REMISSION.' To impute, according to this explanation of the term, is simply to *hold* the descendants of Adam SUBJECT to the '*consequences*' of his fall, though not sharing in the act nor its criminality." "Now in this statement, all who bear the name of Calvinists will unite; and they all regard it as exhibiting a cardinal doctrine of the gospel. And we cannot but think that most of the disputes on this subject, result simply from a diversity in the use of terms."—Pp. 342, 343.

We presume the protestant will consider these remarks of the editors as reflecting rather severely on his want of discrimination. Certain it is, that one or the other must be under a great mistake. For if our statement is substantially one in which "all who bear the name of Calvinists will unite," and which "they all regard as exhibiting a cardinal doctrine of the gospel," then it is very strange that the protestant should hold us up as teaching so many absurdities, and so unceremoniously sneer at our orthodoxy. In this difference between the editors and their correspondent, we very naturally take sides with the former, and wish to be considered as teaching nothing but plain common Calvinistic doctrine. There is a question at issue, however, between the editors and ourselves. Have we abandoned the old doctrine, as they affirm, or have they been labouring under a misapprehension of its nature? Here, then, we have a question of fact, and with the protestant's permission, we shall appeal to names for its decision.

We would say in the out-set, that the views which we

have expressed, are those which we have always entertained, and which we have always understood our brethren, who believe the doctrine of imputation, to hold. If there is any departure, therefore, in them from the opinions of "standard writers on the subject," it is a departure of long standing, and widely extended. We are persuaded, however, that the Spectator is mistaken as to this point, and that the view which we have presented of imputation, is that held by Calvinists and the Reformed churches generally.

As we are not prepared to adopt the Spectator's exposition of our opinions, we proceed to state how we hold the doctrine in question. In imputation, there is, first, an ascription of something to those concerned; and secondly, a determination to deal with them accordingly. Sometimes one, and sometimes the other idea predominates. Thus, in common life, to impute good or bad motives to a man, is to ascribe such motives to him. Here the first idea alone is retained. But when Shimei prayed David, "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me," he prayed that the king would not lay his sin to his charge, and punish him for it. Where the second predominates. Hence, not to impute, is to remit. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity," that is, blessed is the man whose iniquity is pardoned. To impute sin, therefore, "is to lay it to the charge of any, and to deal with them according to its desert."—*Owen*. If the thing imputed be antecedently ours, then there is merely a recognizing it as such, and treating us accordingly. If it be not ours, there is necessarily an ascription of it to us, on some ground or other, and a determination to deal with us according to the merit of the thing imputed. When Paul begged Philemon to impute to him the debt or offence of Onesimus, he begged him to regard him as the debtor or offender, and exact of him whatever compensation he required. When our sins are said to be imputed to Christ, it is meant, that he is treated as a sinner on account of our sins. And when Adam's sin is said to be imputed to his posterity, it is intended, that his sin is laid to their charge and they are punished for it, or are treated as sinners on that account. In all such cases there must be some ground for this imputation; that is, for this laying the conduct of one to the charge of another, and dealing with him accordingly. In the case of Paul it was the voluntary assumption of the

responsibility of Onesimus; so it was in the case of Christ. The ground of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, is the union between them, which is two-fold, a natural union, as between a father and his children, and the union of representation, which is the main idea here insisted upon. A relation admitted on all hands. The Spectator affirms it, when he says, "that Adam was not on trial for himself alone," but for his posterity also, as is clearly implied in the sentence.

What we deny, therefore, is, first, that this doctrine involves any mysterious union with Adam, any confusion of our identity with his, so that his act was personally and properly our act; and secondly, that the moral turpitude of that sin was transferred from him to us; we deny the possibility of any such transfer. These are the two ideas which the Spectator and others consider as necessarily involved in the doctrine of imputation, and for rejecting which, they represent us as having abandoned the old doctrine on the subject. We proceed now to show that they are mistaken on this point.

In proof of this we would remark in the first place, on a fact that has always struck us as rather singular, which is, that while those, who hold the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, do, at the same time, hold the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of Christ's righteousness to us, we seldom or never hear, (from Calvinists at least,) the same objections to the idea of imputation in the two latter cases, as in the first. Is there any one who has the hardihood to charge the whole Calvinistic world (who taught or teach the doctrine of imputation) with believing, that Christ personally and properly committed the sins which are said to be imputed to him? or that the moral turpitude of these sins was transferred to him? Now, we ask, why is this? Why, if the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, supposes that they were the personal actors of his transgression, the imputation of our sins to Christ does not make him the agent of our acts? Why, since at every turn we are asked if we have ever repented of Adam's sin, is it not demanded of us, if Christ ever repented of our sins? We have never been so unhappy, as to have our hearts torn by being told that we believe and teach, that the blessed Saviour was morally a sinner; that our "moral character" was transfer-

red to him. If this is imputation, if this "transfer of moral character" is included in it, we have not words to express our deep abhorrence of the doctrine. We would hold no communion with the man who taught it. And if this is what our brethren mean to charge us with, then is the golden cord of charity forever broken; for what fellowship can there be between parties, where one accuses the other of blasphemy? We do not harbour the idea, however, that our brethren can seriously make such a charge. Nor can they imagine, that when we speak of the imputed righteousness of Christ, we are so insane as to mean that we personally performed the acts of his perfect obedience, and in person died upon the cross. Neither can they suppose that we mean to assert, that his moral excellence was transferred to us.* They never ask us whether we feel self-approbation and complacency for what Christ did; why then ask us if we feel remorse and self-reproach for what Adam did? We say then, that the fact, that Calvinists speak in the same terms of the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us, that they use of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, and illustrate the one by the other, is an a priori argument, we should hope, of conclusive force to prove, that they do not consider either the idea of personal identification, or transfer of moral character as included in the doctrine of imputation.

There is another presumptive argument as to this point, drawn from the common technicalities of theology. What is meant by calling Adam a public person, a representative, a federal head, as is so constantly done by those who teach the doctrine of imputation? Are not these terms intended to express the nature of the union between Adam and his posterity? A union of representation is not a union of identity. If Adam and his race were one and the same, he was not their representative, for a thing cannot represent itself. The two ideas are inconsistent. Where the one is asserted, the other is denied. They therefore who affirm that we sinned in Adam as a representative, do thereby deny

* We know there have been some pitiable instances, in which such ideas have been advanced, by certain Antinomians; but we are not speaking of the *ἰκτενωματα* of the human head and heart, but of a common doctrine of a large and pious portion of the christian world.

that we sinned in him personally. When our formularies say that Adam was "a public person" or representative, and that we "sinned in him," it is to make them affirm and deny the same thing in the same breath, to quote them as teaching that we were personally one with him and personally acted in him. With the same propriety it might be asserted that Alexander of Russia personally signed the treaty with the Turks, because he did it in his minister.

The same terms are used in reference to Christ, who is called the head, representative and substitute of his people, and they all express the nature of the relation which is the ground of imputation, and are absolutely inconsistent with the idea of personal identity and consequent transfer of moral character. When the Spectator, therefore, congratulates us on having rejected a philosophy which confounds all notions of personal identity, he does so under a wrong impression. The fact is, there is no philosophy about it. We do not mean to say, that no man has ever philosophized on this subject, or that there have not been men, who taught a mysterious union of the race with Adam. What we mean to deny is, that such speculations enter at all into the essence of the doctrine of imputation, or are necessary to it. In every doctrine there are certain ideas, which constitute its formal nature, and make it what it is; so that if they are rejected, the doctrine is rejected. It would be the most unreasonable thing in the world, to require of a man who undertakes to defend any doctrine, to make good all the explanations of it which have ever been given, and to justify all the modes of expression ever employed respecting it. What a task would this impose on the advocate of the doctrine of the trinity, of the deity of Christ, or of any other doctrine. This is a task which we would never undertake, and have not now undertaken. Our business is, to make it appear, that the notions of personal oneness, community in action, transfer of moral character, are no part of the doctrine of imputation; not that none of the schoolmen or scholastic divines ever held any of these ideas. For what have they not held? We know, that it is often asserted, that Augustine and his followers held the personal unity of Adam and his race. Döderlein, Knapp, and Bretschneider all assert it, and assert it, one after the other, on the same grounds. But we would remark, in the first place, that we are not pre-

pared to believe this; first, because the passages, which these writers produce in proof of their assertion, do not make it out. The same forms of expression occur in the Bible, and in the writings of men who expressly reject this idea, and even the doctrine of imputation itself. Dr. Hopkins uses as strong language on the connexion of Adam and his posterity, as we have ever seen quoted from Augustine. And, secondly, because, there are modes of expression adopted by Augustine on this subject, in explanation of the ground of imputation, inconsistent with this idea. Turretin quotes and explains Augustine thus: "*Quicumque*, inquit August. ep. 106, *ex illo multi in seipsis futuri erunt, in illo uno, unus homo erant, unitate non specifica, vel numerica, sed partim unitate originis, quia omnes ex uno sunt sanguine, partim unitate representationis, quia unus omnium personam representabat ex ordine Dei.*"—Tom. 1, p. 679. According to this, Augustine taught that we were one in Adam, because he was our common father and common representative, in which there is no mysticism. Let it be admitted, however, that Augustine did give this explanation of the ground of imputation. Do we reject the doctrine because we reject the reason which he gives to justify and explain it? It might, with as much propriety be said, that every man rejects the doctrine of the trinity, who does not adopt every title of Athanasius's exposition of it. It is therefore no special concern of ours, what Augustine held on this point. What we affirm is, that this idea is not essential to the doctrine, and is not embraced by the great body of its defenders. Any man, who holds that there is such an ascription of the sin of Adam to his posterity, as to be the ground of their bearing the punishment of that sin, holds the doctrine of imputation; whether he undertakes to justify this imputation, merely on the ground that we are the children of Adam, or on the principle of representation, or of *scientia media*; or whether he chooses to philosophize on the nature of unity, until he confounds all notions of personal identity, as president Edwards appears to have done.

As it is in vain to make quotations, before we have fixed the meaning of the terms which are constantly recurring in them, we must notice the allegation of the Spectator, as to our incorrect use of certain words, before we proceed to bring any more direct testimony to the fact, that the views

which we have given of the doctrine of imputation are those commonly entertained among Calvinists on the subject. The words *guilt* and *punishment* are those particularly referred to. The former we had defined to be, liability, or exposedness to punishment. We did not mean to say that the word never included the idea of moral turpitude or criminality. We were speaking of its theological usage. It is very possible that a word may have one sense in common life, and another, somewhat modified, in particular sciences. A legal or theological sense of a term may, hence, often be distinguished from its ordinary acceptation. It is, therefore, not much to the purpose, when the question relates to the correct theological use of a word, to quote Dr. Webster's Dictionary, as an authority on the subject. We must appeal to usage. Grotius, who, we presume, will be regarded as a competent witness, in his treatise *De Satisfactione Christi*, uses the word constantly in the sense which we have given it. Thus in the phrase, "De auferendo reatu per remissionis impetrationem apud Deum."—*Opera Theol.* vol. iii. p. 333. On p. 336, "Sanguis pecudum tollebat reatum temporalem, non autem reatum spiritualem." A little after, "Hinc καθαρίζειν est eum reatum tollere, sive efficere remissionem." In all these cases guilt is that which is removed by pardon, i. e. exposure to punishment. Turretin, "Reatus theologice dicitur obligatio ad poenam ex peccato." Tom. i. p. 654. Owen, "Guilt in Scripture is the respect of sin unto the sanction of the law, whereby the sinner becomes obnoxious unto punishment."—*On Justification*, p. 280. On the same page: In sin there is, "its formal nature as it is a transgression of the law; and the stain or the filth that it brings upon the soul; but the guilt of it is nothing but its respect unto punishment from the sanction of the law." Again, "He (Christ) was alienae culpae reus. Perfectly innocent in himself; but took our guilt upon him, or our obnoxiousness unto punishment for sin." Edwards says, "From this it will follow, that guilt, or exposedness to punishment, &c."—Vol. ii. p. 543. Ridgeley, vol. ii. p. 119, "Guilt is an obligation or liableness to suffer punishment for sin committed." If there is any thing fixed in theological language, it is this sense of the word guilt. And if there is any thing in which Calvinists are agreed, it is in saying, that when they affirm "that the guilt of Adam's sin

has come upon us," they mean, exposure to punishment on account of that sin. It would be easy to multiply quotations, but enough has been produced to convince the Spectator, that our sense of the word is not so "peculiar" as he imagined.

"The word punishment, too," he says, "has a peculiar sense, in the vocabulary of the historian."—P. 344. Here again he appeals to Dr Webster, and here again we must dissent; not so much from the doctor's definition, as from the Spectator's exposition of it. The Dr says, that punishment is "any pain or suffering inflicted on a person for a crime or offence." To this we have no special objection. But that the crime or offence must necessarily belong personally to the individual punished, as the Spectator seems to take for granted, we are very far from admitting; for this is the very turning point in the whole discussion respecting imputation. Punishment, according to our views, is any evil inflicted on a person, in the execution of a judicial sentence, on account of sin. That the word is used in this sense, for evils thus inflicted on one person for the offence of another, cannot be denied. It would be easy to fill a volume with examples of this usage, from writers ancient and modern, sacred and profane. We quote a few instances from theologians, as this is a theological discussion. Grotius, (p. 313), in answering the objection of Socinus, that it is unjust that our sins should be punished in Christ, says, "Sed ut omnis hic error dematur, notandum est, esse quidem essentielle poenæ, ut infligatur ob peccatum, sed non item essentielle ei esse, ut infligatur ipsi qui peccavit." On the same page, "Puniri alios ob aliorum delicta non audet negare Socinus." If he uses the word once, he does, we presume, a hundred times in this sense, in this single treatise. Owen says, "There can be no punishment but with respect to the guilt of sin personally committed or imputed."—P. 287. Storr and other modern and moderate theologians, use the word in this sense perpetually. Storr says, "Iedes, durch einen richterlichen Ausspruch um der Sünden willen verhängte Leiden, Strafe heisst," that is, "Every evil judicially inflicted on account of sin, is punishment."—*Zweck des Todes Jesu*, p. 585. No one has ever denied that in its most strict and rigid application, punishment has reference to personal guilt; but this does not alter the case, for usage, the

only law in such matters, has sanctioned its application in the manner in which we have used it, and that too among the most accurate of theological writers.

Having fixed the sense in which these terms are used by the writers to whom we shall refer, we will now proceed to establish our position, that the doctrine of imputation, as taught by standard Calvinistic authors, does not involve, either the idea of a personal oneness with Adam, so that his act is strictly and properly our act, or that of the transfer of moral character.

Our first testimony is from Knapp, whom we quote, not as a Calvinist, but as a historian. In his *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, section 76, he says, "However various the opinions of theologians are respecting imputation, when they come to explain themselves distinctly on the subject, yet the majority agree in general as to this point, that the expression, God imputes the sin of our first parents to their descendants, amounts to this, God punishes the descendants on account of the sin of their first parents." This testimony is no otherwise valuable, than as the opinion of an impartial man, as to the substance of the doctrine. That there are various views, explanations and modes of defending this doctrine, no one ever dreamed of denying, and it would stand alone, in this respect, if there were not.

Turretin (*Quaest.* ix. p. 678), thus explains his views of this subject. "Imputation is either of something foreign to us, or properly ours. Sometimes that is imputed to us which is personally ours, in which sense God imputes to sinners their transgressions, whom he punishes for crimes properly their own; and in reference to what is good, the zeal of Phineas is said to be imputed to him for righteousness.—*Ps.* cvi. 31. Sometimes that is imputed which is without us, and not performed by ourselves; thus the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, and our sins are imputed to him, although he has neither sin in himself nor we righteousness. Here we speak of the latter kind of imputation, not of the former, because we are treating of a sin committed by Adam, not by us." (*Quia agitur de peccato ab Adamo commisso, non a nobis.*) We have here precisely the two ideas excluded from the doctrine which we have rejected, and which the Spectator seems to think essential to it. For Turretin says, that in this case the thing imputed, is something without us,

(extra nos, nec a nobis præstitum,) and secondly, the moral turpitude of the act is not transferred, for it is analogous, he tells us, to the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, and our sins to him, licet nec ipse peccatum in se habeat, nec nos justitiam. That there must be some ground for this imputation is self-evident, and this can only be some relation or union in which the parties stand to each other. This union, however, according to Turretin, is nothing mysterious, nothing which involves a confusion of identity. The union which is to serve as the ground of imputation, he says, may be threefold, "1. Natural, as between a father and his children; 2. Moral and political, as between a king and his subjects; 3. Voluntary, as among friends, and between the guilty and his substitute." The bond between Adam and his posterity is twofold, "1. Natural, as he is the father, and we are his children. 2. Political and forensic, as he was the prince, and representative head of the whole human race. The foundation, therefore, of imputation is not only the natural connexion which exists between us and Adam, since, in that case, all his sins might be imputed to us, but mainly the moral and federal, in virtue of which God entered into covenant with him as our head."

All the arguments which Turretin urges in support of his doctrine, prove that he viewed the subject as we have represented it. He appeals, in the first instance, to *Rom.* v. 12—21. The scope of the passage he takes to be, the illustration of the method of justification, by comparing it to the manner in which men were brought under condemnation. As Adam was made the head of the whole race, so that the guilt of his sin comes on all to condemnation, so Christ is made the head of his people, and his obedience comes on all of them to justification. On page 681, he says, "We are constituted sinners in Adam in the same way (eadem ratione) in which we are constituted righteous in Christ: but in Christ we are constituted righteous by the imputation of righteousness. Therefore we are made sinners in Adam by the imputation of his sin, otherwise the comparison is destroyed." Another of his arguments is derived from the native depravity of men, which, he says, is a great evil, and cannot be reconciled with the divine character, unless we suppose that men are born in this state of corruption as a punishment. As this evil has the nature of punishment, it necessarily supposes some antecedent sin, on account of which it is inflicted.

ted, for there is no punishment but on account of sin. "It cannot, however, be a sin properly and personally ours, because we were not yet in existence. Therefore, it is the sin of Adam imputed to us." *Non potest autem esse PECCATUM NOSTRUM PROPRIUM ET PERSONALE, QUIA NONDUM FUIMUS ACTU.* Almost the very form of expression quoted from us by the Spectator to prove that we have abandoned the old doctrine of imputation.

In order to evince his sense of the importance of the doctrine, he remarks on its connexion with that of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, and says that all the objections urged against the one, bear against the other; so that if the one be rejected the other cannot stand. We shall give in his own words a passage from page 689, which appears to us very decisive as to the point in hand. "*Voluntas ergo Adami potest dici singularis actus proprietate, universalis representationis jure, singularis quia ab uno ex individuis humanis profecta est, universalis quia individuum illud universum genus humanum repræsentabat. Sic justitia Christi est actus unius, et bene tamen dicitur omnium fidelium per divinam imputationem; ut quod unus fecit, omnes censeantur fecisse, si unus mortuus est, omnes sunt mortui.*"—*2 Cor. v. 15.* Is it possible to assert in clearer language, that the act of Adam was personally his own and only his, and that it is only on the principle of representation that it can be said to be ours?

These quotations from Turretin we think abundantly sufficient to establish our assertion, that the doctrine under consideration neither involves any confusion of personal identity, nor any transfer of the moral turpitude of Adam's sin to his posterity. As Turretin is universally regarded as having adhered strictly to the common Calvinistic system, and on the mere question of fact, as to what that system is, is second to no man in authority, we might here rest our cause. But we deem this a matter of much practical importance, and worthy of being clearly established. Misconceptions on this subject have been, and still are, the means of alienating brethren. They are the ground of many hard thoughts, and of much disrespectful language. It is not easy to feel cordially united to men whom we consider as teaching mischievous absurdities; nor is it, on the other hand, adapted to call forth brotherly love to have oneself held up to the

public as inculcating opinions which shock every principle of common sense, and contradict the plainest moral judgments of men. We hope, therefore, to be heard patiently, while we attempt still further to prove that our doctrine is such as has been so often stated.

We refer in the next place to the testimony of Tuckney, not only because he was a man of great accuracy and learning, but also because he stands in an intimate relation to our church. He was a member of the Westminster assembly of divines, and of the committee which drafted our confession of faith.* He is said also to have drawn up a large portion of the larger catechism. He is, therefore, a peculiarly competent witness as to the sense in which our formularies mean to teach the doctrine of imputation. In his *Prælectiones Theologicæ*, read, as royal professor, in the university of Cambridge, and published in 1679, there is a long and learned discourse on the imputation of Christ's righteousness. In the explanation and defence of this doctrine, he enters into an accurate investigation of the whole subject of imputation. This discourse abounds in the minute scholastic distinctions of the day, which it is not necessary for our purpose to detail. It will be sufficient to show that his view of the subject is the same as that which we have presented. In reference to the two passages, *2 Cor. v. 21*, and *Rom. v. 18*, he says, "We have a most beautiful twofold analogy. We are made *the righteousness of God* in Christ in the same way that he *was made sin* for us. That is, by imputation. This analogy the former passage exhibits. But the other, (*Rom. v. 18*) presents one equally beautiful. We are accounted righteous through Christ, in the same manner that we are accounted guilty through Adam. The latter is by imputation, therefore also the former."—P. 234. The same idea is repeatedly and variously presented. As, therefore, he so clearly states, that in all these cases imputation is of the same nature, if we can show (if indeed it needs showing) that he does not teach that our sins are so imputed to Christ, as to make him morally a sinner, or his righteousness to us, as to make us morally righteous, we shall have proved that he does not teach such an imputation of Adam's sin to

* Reid's *Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of the Divines of the Westminster Assembly*, vol. ii. p. 187.

his posterity as involves a transfer of its moral character. The cardinal Bellarmin, it seems, in arguing against the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, urged the same objection which we are now considering, maintaining that if Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, then are we really inherently righteous in the sight of God. To this Tuckney replies, "Who of us has ever been so much beside himself, as to pretend that he was inherently righteous, in the sense of Bellarmin, so that he should think himself pure and immaculate?"—P. 226. The same sentiment is still more strongly expressed on page 220. "We are not so foolish or blasphemous as to say, or even think, that the imputed righteousness of Christ renders us formally and subjectively righteous." And adds, we might as well be made wise and just with the wisdom and integrity of another. "The righteousness of Christ belongs properly to himself, and is as inseparable and incommunicable as any other attribute of a thing, or its essence itself." Bellarmin, however, as so often happens in controversies of this nature, admits the very thing he is contending against. Tuckney quotes him as confessing, "Christum nobis justitiam factum quoniam satisfecit Patri pro nobis, et eam satisfactionem ita nobis donat et communicat cum nos justificat, ut nostra satisfactio et justitia dici possit, atque hoc modo non esse absurdum si quis diceret nobis imputari Christi justitiam et merita cum nobis donentur et applicentur ac si nos ipsi Deo satisfecissemus." On which our author remarks, that neither Luther nor Calvin could more appropriately describe justification by imputed righteousness.

To the other objection of Bellarmin, (which proceeds upon the same erroneous supposition, that imputation conveys the moral character of the thing imputed,) that Christ must be regarded as morally a sinner, if our sins were imputed to him, Tuckney replies, "Although we truly say that our sins are imputed to Christ, yet who of us was ever so BLASPHEMOUS as to say, that they were so imputed as if he had actually committed them, or that he was inherently and properly a sinner, as to the stain and pollution of sin." Bellarmin admitted that our sins were imputed to Christ, quoad debitum satisfaciendi, and his righteousness to us, quoad satisfactionem, and the protestants replied, this was all they contended for.

We do not know how it could be more pointedly or variously denied, that the transfer of moral character is included in this doctrine. The testimony of Tuckney is the more valuable, as he not only clearly expresses his own opinion, but utterly denies that any of his fellow Calvinists ever understood or taught the doctrine in this manner.

The same views are presented by Owen, who carried matters as far as most Calvinists are wont to do. In his work on justification, this subject naturally presents itself, and is discussed at length. A few quotations will suffice for our purpose. The imputation of that unto us which is not antecedently our own, he says, may be various. "Only it must be observed, that no imputation of this kind is to account them, unto whom any thing is imputed, *to have done the things themselves that are imputed to them.* That were not to impute, but to err in judgment, and indeed to overthrow the whole nature of gracious imputation. But it is to make that to be ours by imputation, which was not ours before, unto all the ends and purposes whereunto it would have served if it had been our own without any such imputation. It is therefore a manifest mistake of their own, which some make the ground of a charge on the doctrine of imputation. For they say, if our sins were imputed unto Christ, then must he be esteemed to have done what we have done amiss, and so be the greatest sinner that ever was: and on the other side, if his righteousness be imputed unto us, then are we esteemed to have done what he did, and so stand in no need of pardon. *But this is contrary unto the nature of imputation,* which proceeds on no such judgment, but, on the contrary, that we ourselves have done nothing of what is imputed unto us; nor Christ any thing of what was imputed unto him."—P. 236.

Again, on the same page, "Things that are not our own originally, personally, inherently, may yet be imputed unto us, *ex justitia*, by the rule of righteousness. And this may be done upon a double relation unto those whose they are, 1, federal; 2, natural. Things done by one may be imputed unto others, *propter relationem fœderalem*, because of a covenant relation between them. So the sin of Adam was, and is imputed unto all his posterity, as we shall afterwards more fully declare. And the ground hereof is, that we

stood in the same covenant with him, who was our head and representative."

Here then it is asserted, that the sin of Adam is not ours, "originally, personally, inherently," and that the ground of imputation is not a mystic oneness of person, but the relation of representation.

On page 242 he says, "This imputation (of Christ's righteousness) is not the transmission or transfusion of the righteousness of another into them that are to be justified, that they should become perfectly and inherently righteous thereby. For it is impossible that the righteousness of one should be transfused into another, to become his subjectively and inherently." Neither is it possible, according to Owen, that the unrighteousness of one should be transfused into another. For these two cases are analogous, as he over and over asserts; thus, p. 307, "As we are made guilty by Adam's actual sin, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us; so are we made righteous by the righteousness of Christ, which is not inherent in us, but only imputed to us." On page 468 he says, "Nothing is intended by the imputation of sin unto any, but the rendering them justly obnoxious unto the punishment due unto that sin. As the not imputing of sin is the freeing of men from being subject or liable unto punishment."

It would be easy to multiply quotations to almost any extent on this subject, from the highest authorities, but we hope that enough has been said to convince our readers, that the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin includes neither the idea of any mysterious union of the human race with him, so that his sin is strictly and properly theirs, nor that of a transfer of moral character. This we are persuaded is the common Calvinistic doctrine.

It is proper to state, however, that there is another theory on this subject. About the middle of the seventeenth century Placæus, professor in the French protestant school at Saumur, rejected the doctrine of imputation, and taught that original sin consisted solely in the inherent native depravity of men. In consequence of his writings, a national synod was called in 1644-5, in which this doctrine was condemned. The decree of the synod, as given by Turretin and De Moor, is in these words: "Cum relatam esset ad synodum, scripta quædam alia typis evulgata, alia manu exarata pro-

diisse, quæ totam rationem peccati originalis sola corruptione hæreditaria in omnibus hominibus inhærente definiunt, et primi peccati Adami imputationem negant: Damnavit Synodus doctrinam ejusmodi, quatenus peccati originalis naturam ad corruptionem hæreditariam posterorum Adæ ita restringit, ut imputationem excludat primi illius peccati, quo lapsus est Adam: Adeoque censuris omnibus ecclesiasticis subjiciendos censuit, Pastores, Professores, et quoscunque alios, qui in hujus quaestionis disceptatione a communi sententia recesserint ecclesiarum Protestantium, quæ omnes hactenus et corruptionem illam, et imputationem hanc in omnes Adami posteros descendentem agnoverunt, &c.”—*Tur.* p. 677.

In order to evade the force of this decision, Placæus proposed the distinction between mediate and immediate imputation. According to the latter, (which is the common view,) the sin of Adam is imputed to all his posterity, as the ground of punishment antecedently to inherent corruption, which in fact results from the penal withholding of divine influences; but according to the former, the imputation is subsequent to the view of inherent depravity, and is founded upon it, as the ground of our being associated with Adam in his punishment. This distinction, which Turretin says was excogitated ad fucum faciendum, merely retains the name, while the doctrine of imputation is really rejected. “For if the sin of Adam is only said to be imputed to us mediately, because we are rendered guilty in the sight of God, and obnoxious to punishment, on account of the inherent corruption which we derive from Adam, there is properly no imputation of Adam’s sin, but only of inherent corruption.”—P. 677.

Our readers may find a long account of the controversy which arose on this question in De Moor’s Commentary on Mark’s Compend, vol. iii. p. 262, et seq. One of the most interesting works which appeared at this time, was the tract by the celebrated Rivet, intended to prove that all the protestant churches and leading divines held the doctrine of imputation as it was presented by the national synod of France in opposition to Placæus. In a commendation of this work the professors of theology at Leyden, express their grief, that among other doctrines recently agitated in France, that of the imputation of Adam’s sin had been called in question, “Cum tamen eo negato, nec justa esse possit origi-

nalis naturae humanae corruptio, et facilis inde via sit ad negationem imputationis justitiae secundi Adami." While they rejoiced in the unanimous decision of the French synod, they deeply regretted that any should disregard it, and endeavour to disseminate a doctrine "contrarium communi omnium ferme Christianorum consensui, solis Pelagii et Socini discipulis exceptis." They recommend strongly the work of their colleague Rivet, who, they say, had endeavoured, "Synodi nationalis decretum tueri, dogma vere Catholicum stabilire, bene sentientes in veritate confirmare, aberrantes in viam reducere auctoritatibus gravibus, et *universali totius orbis Christianorum consensu.*"—*Opera Riveti*, tom. 3, p. 223, or *De Moor*, tom. 3, p. 274.

Instead of writing an article, we should be obliged to write a volume, if we were to take up and fully discuss all the subjects, relevant and irrelevant, presented in the protestant's inquiries. We have followed our own judgment in the selection of topics, and touched on those points which we thought most likely to be interesting and useful. We feel, therefore, perfectly authorised to dismiss, at least for the present, the history of this doctrine. Turretin, the French synod, the professors of Leyden, the Augsburg Confession, assert as strongly as we have done, its general prevalence among orthodox christians. The second article of the Augsburg Confession runs thus: "Item docent, quod post lapsum Adae, omnes homines naturali modo propagati nascentes habeant peccatum originis. Intelligimus autem peccatum originis, quod sic vocant Sancti Patres, et omnes orthodoxi et piè eruditi in Ecclesia videlicet reatum, quo nascentes propter Adae lapsum rei sunt iræ Dei et mortis aeternae, et ipsam corruptionem humanae naturae propagatam ab Adamo." These quotations will at least satisfy our readers, that we have not been more rash in our assertions than many others before us, and is as much, we think, as the protestant's inquiry on this point calls for. Our principal concern is with the editors of the *Spectator*, who have presented the most interesting subject of investigation. We revert, therefore, to their statement, that Edwards, Stapfer and "other standard writers on the subject," taught the doctrine of imputation differently from what we have done. That this is not correct, as relates to the great body of the Reformed Theologians, we have, we think, sufficiently prov-

ed. How the case stands with Edwards and Stapfer we shall now proceed to inquire.

As Edwards appears to have borrowed, in some measure, his views on this subject from Stapfer, we shall begin with the latter. We must, in the outset, dissent from the remark of the Spectator, that Stapfer is to be regarded as a "standard writer" on the doctrine of imputation. So far from it, the synod of Berne refused to sanction his views on the subject, as inconsistent with the doctrines of the reformed churches*. And in his work, as now printed, he apologizes for his statements on this point, and endeavours to make it appear, that they do not involve a departure from the common doctrine, (Theol. Pol. vol. 4. p. 562.) with how much success the reader may judge. On page 156, in answer to the common objection that imputation is inconsistent with justice, he says, in substance, no one could accuse God of injustice, if in virtue of a divine constitution, had Adam remained holy, his posterity had been holy also; and therefore no one should complain, if in virtue of the same constitution, they are born in the image of their unholy progenitor. And then says expressly, this is the whole amount of imputation, "*Peccati autem primi imputatio in nulla alia re consistit quam quod posterius ejus et eodem loco habentur et similes sunt parenti.*" And plainer still a little afterwards, "*dum Adamo similem dare sobolem, et peccatum ejus imputare unum idemque.*" This, as we understand it, is precisely Dr Hopkin's doctrine; that in virtue of a divine constitution the posterity of Adam were to have the same moral character that he had. This too is the Spectator's doctrine; he says, "that Adam was not on trial for himself alone, but by a divine constitution, all his descendants were to have, in their natural state, the same character and state with their progenitor."—P. 348. And yet these brethren denounce, in no very measured terms, the old doctrine of imputation: It is rather singular, therefore, that they should quote Stapfer as a "standard writer" on that doctrine, who asserts their

* This statement is made confidently, although from memory. In the first copy of his work which fell into our hands, this fact is stated, and our impression of its correctness is confirmed, by the nature of his opinions as now presented, and his apology for them.

own view nearly totidem verbis. As to the passage which the Spectator produces to prove that he held the old doctrine as they understand it, (that is, as including personal union and transfer of character,) it amounts to very little. The passage is this: "God in imputing this sin (Adam's) *finds* this whole moral person (the human race) ALREADY a sinner, and *not* merely constitutes it such." He says, indeed, that Adam and his race form one moral person, and so would Turretin and Tuckney, and so would we, and yet one and all deny that there was any personal union. The very epithet *moral*, shows that no such idea is intended. When lawyers call a corporation of a hundred men a legal person, we do not hear that philosophy is called in to explain how this can be. And there is no need of her aid to explain how Adam and his race are one, in the sense of common Calvinists. But he says, God finds "this whole moral person ALREADY a sinner?" yes, he denies antecedent and immediate imputation, and teaches, that it is from the view and on the ground of inherent hereditary depravity imputation takes place. This is mediate imputation, "*quæ hæreditariæ corruptionis in nos ab Adamo derivatæ intuitum consequitur, eaque mediante fit;*" and which Turretin says, is no imputation at all, "*nomen imputationis retinendo, rem ipsam de facto tollit.*" Though we do not believe that Stapfer held either of the ideas which the Spectator attributes to him, identity or transfer, it is of little account to us what his views on these points were, as we think it clear that he rejected the doctrine of imputation, as held by the Reformed generally. He appeals indeed to Vitranga and Lampe to bear out his statements. How it was with the former we do not pretend to say, but as to Lampe, the very passage which Stapfer quotes contradicts his theory. Lampe says, "*Gott hätte die Nackkommen Adams nicht in Sünden lassen geböhren werden, wenn seine Schuld nicht auf seine Nachkommen wære übergegangen,*" *i. e.* "God would not have permitted the descendants of Adam to be born in sin, if his guilt had not come upon them." Here the guilt of Adam (exposure to punishment on account of his sin) is represented as antecedent to corruption and assumed to justify it, and not consequent on the view of it. This is the old doctrine. That this is the fact, is plain from the quotations which we have already made. "Imputation being denied," say the

Leyden divines, "inherent corruption cannot be just." So Turretin and Calvinists generally argue; of course imputation is antecedent to corruption. The Spectator must have seen, that Stapfer's statement was inconsistent with the old doctrine, had he recollected, how often it is objected to that doctrine "that sin cannot be the punishment of sin."*

We are inclined to think that president Edwards agreed with Stapfer in his views of this subject; because he quotes from him with approbation the very passage which we have just produced; and because his own statements amount to very much the same thing. In vol. 2, p. 544, he says, "The first being of an evil disposition in a child of Adam, whereby he is disposed to approve the sin of his first father, so far as to imply a full and perfect consent of heart to it, I think, is not to be looked upon as a consequence of the imputation of that first sin, any more than the full consent of Adam's own heart in the act of sinning; which was not consequent on the imputation, but rather prior to it in the order of nature. Indeed the derivation of the evil disposition to Adam's posterity, or rather, the co-existence of the evil disposition implied in Adam's first rebellion, in the root and branches, is a consequence of the union that the wise Author of the world has established between Adam and his posterity; but not properly a consequence of the imputation of his sin; nay, it is rather antecedent to it, as it was in Adam himself. The first depravity of heart, and the imputation of that sin, are both the consequence of that established union; but yet in such order, that the evil disposition is first, and the charge of guilt consequent, as it was in the case of Adam himself." We think that Edwards here clearly asserts the doctrine of mediate imputation; that is, that the charge of the guilt of Adam's sin is consequent on depravity of heart. According to the common doctrine, however, imputation is antecedent to this depravity, and is assumed to account for it, that is, to reconcile its existence with God's justice. The doctrine of Edwards is precisely that which was so formally rejected when presented by Placaëus. Turretin in the very state-

* We do not teach, however, "that sin is the punishment of sin." The punishment we suffer for Adam's sin is abandonment on the part of God, the withholding of divine influences; corruption is consequent on this abandonment.

ment of the question says, "It is not inquired whether the sin of Adam may be said to be imputed to us, because, on account of original sin inherent in us, (depravity of heart), we deserve to be viewed as in the same place with him, as though we had actually committed his sin," p. 678, "but the question is, whether his sin is imputed to his posterity, with an imputation, not mediate and consequent, but immediate and antecedent." It is of the latter he says, "nos cum orthodoxis affirmamus." The imputation consequent on depravity of heart is precisely that which the old Calvinists declared was no imputation at all of Adam's sin, and which they almost with one voice rejected. It is on the ground of this theory that Edwards says, as Stapfer had done, that "the sin of the apostacy is not theirs, (mankind's) merely because God imputes it to them; but it is truly and properly theirs, and on that ground God imputes it to them."—P. 559. That is, imputation, instead of being antecedent, is consequent, and founded on the view of inherent depravity. When the Spectator, therefore, quotes this sentence as contradicting our statement, we readily admit the fact. It not only contradicts us, however, but is, as we have shown, utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of imputation as taught in the Reformed churches. To say, either that the sin of Adam is imputed to us, because it is inherent in us, (or is truly and properly ours), or that it becomes thus inherent, or thus ours, by being imputed, is, as Owen, Turretin, Rivet and others over and over affirm, to overthrow the whole nature of imputation. It might with as much justice be asserted, that the righteousness of Christ is first inherently and subjectively ours, and on that ground is imputed to us; or that our sins were subjectively the sins of Christ, and on that ground were imputed to him. Turretin, in so many words, asserts the very reverse of what Edwards maintains. The latter says, "the sin is truly and properly ours;" the former, "*non potest esse peccatum nostrum proprium et personale.*"

The fact is, that Edward's whole discourse on this subject was intended more to vindicate the doctrine of native depravity than that of imputation. It is for this purpose that he enters into his long and ingenious, though unsatisfactory argument on the nature of unity, and the divinely constituted oneness of Adam and his race. He hoped, in this way, the more readily to account for the existence of moral corrup-

tion, and this he makes the ground of imputation. We are surely, therefore, not to be burdened with the defence of Edward's theory on this subject, which, we think, we have abundantly shown is not the doctrine commonly received among Calvinists, but utterly inconsistent with it. As he had rejected all of imputation but the name, it is no matter of surprise that his followers soon discarded the term itself, and contented themselves with expressing the substance of his doctrine in much fewer words, viz. that God, agreeably to a general constitution, determined that Adam's posterity should be like himself; born in his moral image, whether that was good or bad. This is Stapfer's doctrine, almost in so many words; and Edwards quotes and adopts his language.

We are bound in candour, however, to state that we are not able to reconcile the view here given of Edward's doctrine, with several passages which occur in his work on Original Sin. Thus, in page 540, he says, "I desire it may be noted, that I do not suppose the natural depravity of the posterity of Adam is owing to the course of nature only: it is also owing to the just judgment of God." And in the same paragraph, "God, in righteous judgment, continued to absent himself from Adam after he became a rebel; and withheld from him now those influences of the Holy Spirit which he before had. And just thus I suppose it to be with every natural branch of mankind: all are looked upon as sinning in and with their common root; and God righteously withholds special influences and spiritual communications from all, for this sin." But how is this? If these special influences are withheld "for this sin," and as a "righteous judgment," then assuredly the sin for which this righteous judgment is inflicted, must be considered as already theirs, and not first imputed after the existence of the depravity resulting from these influences being withheld. According to Edwards, depravity results from withholding special divine influences, and according to this passage, the withholding these influences is a just judgment for Adam's sin; then of course this sin is punished before the depravity exists, but it cannot be punished before it is imputed, the imputation, therefore, according to this passage, is antecedent to the depravity. But according to the other passage quoted above, the depravity is first and the imputation subsequent. We are unable to reconcile these two statements. The one teaches immediate

and antecedent imputation, which is the old doctrine; the other mediate and consequent, which the old writers considered as a virtual denial of that doctrine. However this reconciliation is to be effected, we have said enough to show that neither Stapfer nor Edwards can be considered "standard writers on this subject," and that old Calvinists are under no obligations to defend their statements.

We hope our readers are now convinced that we have made good our position, that neither the personal identity of Adam and his posterity, community in act, nor transfer of moral character form any part of the doctrine of imputation as taught by standard Calvinistic writers.

We have left ourselves very little room to notice the protestant's difficulties. As they are almost all founded upon misapprehension, they are already answered by the mere statement of the doctrine. On page 340 he has the following sentences: "The writer in question holds, that the sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity, to their guilt, condemnation and ruin, without any act on their part.—P. 90. Of course, then, from the moment they began to exist, that moment they were involved in this imputation. This he does most expressly affirm, by adopting, on page 94, the statement of "ancient commentators," that David "contracted pollution in his conception." Here are two great mistakes. First, the writer does not discriminate between imputation and inherent depravity. He grounds his assertion, that we teach that all men are involved in the imputation of Adam's sin from the first moment of their existence, because we said that David was conceived in sin; as though these two things were one and the same. He should have remembered that Dr Dwight, and a multitude of others, hold one of these doctrines and reject the other. The Spectator, who understands the subject better, says, that we teach that "native depravity is a punishment inflicted on us for the sin of Adam." We hardly teach, however, that the punishment is the thing punished. This confusion of the imputation of Adam's sin and inherent depravity runs through this writer's whole piece, and vitiates all his arguments. The second mistake here is, that imputation makes the thing imputed subjectively our's; which is a contradiction in terms, or as Owen says, is "to overthrow that which is affirmed." "To be alienae culpa reus, makes no

man a sinner." The same mistake is the ground of his inquiry, how Paul could say of Jacob and Esau, before their birth, that they had done neither good nor evil, if the doctrine of imputation is correct? This doctrine does not affirm that they had done either good or evil. When it is affirmed that the sin of Adam is imputed to them, it is thereby said that *they* did not commit it, and that it is not subjectively theirs.

Most of the other difficulties of the protestant are founded on the principle that "*a knowledge of law and duty is necessary, in order that sin should exist.*" Supposing we should admit this, what has it to do with imputation? There have been men who adopted this principle and built their theology upon it, who still hold this doctrine. The whole difficulty results from the protestant not discriminating between two very different things, the imputation of Adam's sin, and native depravity. All his queries founded on this principle, go to show that children cannot be morally depraved before they are moral agents, but have nothing to do with imputation. This is not the time or place to answer these inquiries, but we would ask in our turn, how Adam could be holy before he voluntarily obeyed the law, as the protestant, perhaps, still holds, if a child may not be unholy, before he voluntarily transgresses it?

The true question appears to have glimmered for a moment on the protestant, when he asked: "Is it a scripture doctrine that the guilt of others is imputed to men as their own?" What does this mean? Does he intend to ask whether the (moral) guilt of one man is ever transferred or transfused into others? We apprehend, not. The question, here, must be tantamount to this: Is the sin of one man ever punished in another? for he asks, how is this imputation of guilt to be reconciled with Ezek. xviii. 20? "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son, &c." The protestant will hardly maintain that the Israelites, to whose murmurs the prophet gave this reply, believed that the sins of their fathers were infused into them, their "moral character" transferred to them. Their complaint was: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge," that is, our fathers sinned and we are punished for it. To be punished for the sin of another, then, is, according to the protestant's doctrine, for this once at least, to have the guilt of that sin

imputed. This is our doctrine too. Now, does the gentleman mean to ask whether it is a scripture doctrine that one man ever bears the iniquity of another? If he does, it is easily answered. God says of himself that he is a jealous God, "visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon their children," a solemn and often repeated declaration.—*Ex.* xx. 25. xxxiv. 37. *Num.* xiv. 18. Job says from his observation of divine providence, "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? God layeth up his iniquity for his children."—xx. 19. Jeremiah says "Thou recompensest the iniquities of the fathers into the bosoms of their children after them."—xxxii. 18. *Lament.* v. 7, he says, "Our fathers sinned and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." Surely the gentleman's question is answered in the only sense it can possibly bear in the connexion in which it stands. If it be said, that these expressions are to be taken in a general and popular sense, and not as affirming the doctrine of imputation; very well—then why quote them on the subject? The one form affirms precisely what the other, in a given case, denies. As to the question, how the assertion that one man ever bears the iniquities of another, (*i. e.* the doctrine of imputation) is to be reconciled with Ezekiel, it is no special concern of ours. That is, it is as much obligatory on the protestant as on us, to say, how two passages, one of which affirms and another denies the same thing, are to be brought into harmony. One thing, however, is certain, that Ezekiel cannot be so construed as to assert, that no man ever has, nor ever shall bear the iniquity of another; for this would make him contradict positively what is more than once asserted in the word of God. The context, it is presumed, will show the meaning of the prophet, and the extent to which his declaration is to be carried. The Jews complained that they had been driven into exile, not for their own sins, but for those of their fathers. The prophet tells them they had no need to look further than to themselves, but should repent and turn unto God; and assures them, that they should have no more any occasion to use that proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge;" but that the principle on which God would administer his government towards them, would be, that every man should bear his own burden. Is any thing more asserted in this passage, than a general purpose of God as to his deal-

ings with his people? And is there any thing inconsistent, in this general declaration, with those other passages in which one man is said, under peculiar circumstances, to bear the iniquity of another? And can such a passage, containing nothing more than a general principle, from which, even as it regards temporal affairs, there are many solemn departures recorded in the word of God, be brought up in contradiction to other solemn declarations, in which God declares he would act upon a different principle? This passage asserts nothing in opposition to any doctrine of ours. We admit, in its full force, that it is a general principle in the divine government, that every man shall bear his own burden; but we do not admit that because this is the case, there can be no such connexion between one man and another, that one may not justly bear the iniquity of the other. A declaration, therefore, which, at most, has reference only to the private and personal sins of individuals, bound together by no other tie than consanguinity, and which, even there, is only true as a general principle, can never with any propriety be made the ground of an argument, in reference to cases entirely dissimilar. The protestant, however, may be much better qualified than we are, to reconcile the declaration of Ezekiel with those quoted from Moses and Jeremiah, and with the obvious departures from the principle it contains, recorded in the word of God and observed in his providence, and it is surely as much his concern to do this as ours.

The concession which the gentleman has here unintentionally made, is, however, important. According to him, for one man to bear the iniquity of another, is to have his guilt imputed to him. This is our doctrine, and the doctrine of the Reformed churches. This is what is meant by imputation, and nothing more nor less. That this is the case is evident, not only from the numerous quotations already made, but also from the fact that Calvinists constantly appeal to those passages in which Christ is said to have borne our sins, as teaching this doctrine. He is said to bear our iniquities, precisely in the sense in which in Ezekiel it is declared that "the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father." If, therefore, as the protestant thinks, the passage in Ezekiel denies the doctrine, the other passages must assert it, in reference to Christ. Now let it be remembered, that these

Calvinists affirm, that we bear the sin of Adam, in the same sense (*eadem ratione, eodem modo*) in which Christ bore our sins, and what becomes of all his objections?

Our wonder is, that when the protestant had caught the glimpse of the doctrine, which is betrayed in this paragraph, he should in the very next, entirely lose sight of it, and ask, "Whether the first principles of moral consciousness do not decide, that sin, in its proper sense, is the result of what we have done ourselves; not of what was done for us without our knowledge or consent? I ask, in what part of the Bible are we called upon to repent of Adam's sin? And finally, whether the historian would honestly say, with all his attachment to the opinions of the fathers, that he has ever so appropriated Adam's sin to himself, as truly to recognize it as his own, and to repent of it as such?"—P. 342. That is, imputed sin becomes personal sin. The old mistake. Just before, to impute the sin of one man to another, was not to render that sin personally his, but merely to cause the one "to bear the iniquity" of the other, in the Hebrew sense of that phrase. He never could have imagined, that when Ezekiel declared "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," he meant to say, that the son shall not have his father's sin made personally and subjectively his; when he quoted the prophet, therefore, he must have seen that to impute sin, meant to cause those to whom it is imputed to bear the punishment of it. We regret that our author did not arrive at this idea sooner, and that he did not retain it longer, as it would have saved him the trouble of asking all these questions, and us the trouble of answering them.

We have frequently been asked, by young men, if we have ever repented of Adam's sin, and have uniformly, to their obvious discomfort, answered in the negative. Knowing the sense in which the question was put, it would have confirmed their misconceptions to have answered otherwise. We have never so appropriated that sin as to recognize it as properly and personally our own, or as the ground of personal remorse. We have always considered this question as unreasonable as it would be to ask us, if we have ever felt self approbation and complacency for the imputed righteousness of Christ. That there is a very just and proper sense in which we should repent of the sin of Adam, we readily admit; and are perfectly aware that old writers insist much

upon the duty. Not however on the principle that his sin is personally ours, or that its moral turpitude is transferred from him to us; but on the principle that a child is humbled and grieved at the misconduct of a father; or that we are called upon to repent of the sins of our rulers, or of our nation, or of our church, (as was the case with the Corinthians);* not as personally guilty of their sins, but in virtue of the relation in which we stand to them. It is just and proper, too, that we should recognize the justice of that constitution by which we bear the sin of our first father, remembering "that he was not on trial for himself alone," but also for us, and consequently, that we fell when he fell, and should, therefore, bow before God as members of an apostate and condemned race.

We have now gone over those inquiries of the protestant which we consider it important to notice, and answered them to the best of our ability. If there is any thing in our reply adapted to disturb christian harmony and brotherhood, we shall deeply regret it. Some apology, however, will be found in the fact, that we have been held up by the protestant to the contempt and reprobation of the public for doctrines which we never held, and which we never, even in appearance, advanced. As this has been done ignorantly, we feel no manner of unkindness towards the writer, whoever he may be, although we think he was bound to understand what our doctrines were, before he thus unqualifiedly denounced them. There is not here a mere misapprehension of our meaning, which might be as much attributable to our want of perspicuity, as to his want of discrimination; but there is an entire misapprehension of the whole doctrine of imputation, as held by common Calvinists. We are aware that some excuse for this is to be found in the manner in which president Edwards has presented the subject. But a man who undertakes to write on any doctrine, and especially severely to censure his brethren, ought to extend his views beyond one solitary writer, who, as in the case before us, may prove to be no fair representative of its advocates.

Our main object has been attained, if we have succeeded

* This is one of the cases to which old writers refer for illustration. See Goodwin's works, vol. 3, p. 372.

in disabusing the minds of those brethren who have been accustomed to reject and condemn the doctrine of imputation, under the impression that it teaches a "oneness with Adam in action," and a "transfer of moral acts or moral character" from him to us. That this is not the doctrine, we hope we have abundantly proved. Nothing more is meant by the imputation of sin, than to cause one man to bear the iniquity of another. If, therefore, we bear the punishment of Adam's sin, that sin is imputed to us; if Christ bore the punishment of our sins, those sins were imputed to him; and if we are justified on the ground of Christ's righteousness, that righteousness is imputed to us. The question here arises, is this scriptural doctrine? As this, after all, is the main point, we regret that our limits absolutely forbid a full and satisfactory answer. As the decision of this question turns on principles which it would require much time and space fully to discuss, it would be in vain to argue about details while these principles remain unsettled. The difference of opinion on this subject, although manifested here, does not commence at this point, its origin lies further back, in diversity of views on the divine character and government.

Let us see, however, what the difference between our brethren and us, as to the doctrine of imputation, really is. They agree with us in saying, that Adam was the federal head and representative of his race. Many of them use this precise language; and the Spectator employs a mode of expression perfectly tantamount to it, when he says, "Adam was not on trial for himself alone," but for his posterity. They agree with us also in saying, that the descendants of Adam suffer the consequences of his fall. What these consequences are, is a subject on which there is great diversity of opinion. Many maintain that the only direct consequence of the fall is mortality, or liability to temporal death; others, as Dr Dwight, (who may be taken as an example of a large class,) say that depravity, or corruption of nature is this consequence;* others, as the Spectator, "that by a divine con-

* See his Sermon on Human Depravity derived from Adam. His doctrine is that "human corruption" is the consequence of Adam's sin. By corruption, he means depravity of heart, or nature, antecedent to actual transgressions, or to moral agency. Because he says, "Infants are contaminated in their moral nature, and born in the likeness of apostate Adam." This is irresistibly proved, he

stitution, all his descendants were to have, in their natural state, the same character and condition with their progenitor; the universality and certainty of sin, therefore, are not the result of imitation or accidental circumstances, but of a divine constitution," (p. 343); others again, as the old Calvinists, say that the consequence of the fall was, that the same penalty which Adam incurred, came upon his posterity. Now it is evident that there is one difficulty, and it is the main one, which presses all these schemes in common, viz. that all mankind are made subject "to those consequences which Adam brought upon himself personally by his fall."—*Spectator*, p. 343. It is therefore evidently uncandid, though very common, for those who deny the doctrine of imputation, to represent this difficulty as bearing exclusively on that doctrine. They ask, with the utmost confidence, how it can be reconciled with the justice or goodness of God, that millions of innocent beings should suffer for a crime which they never committed? as though this difficulty did not press their own theory with equal (and, we think, tenfold greater) force. For what greater evil, for moral and immortal beings, can there be, than to be born "contaminated in their moral nature," as Dr Dwight teaches; or under a divine constitution, as the *Spectator* says, which secures, "the universality and certainty of sin," and that too with undeviating and remorseless effect. It is, as Coleridge well says, "an outrage on common sense," to affirm that it is no evil for men to be placed on their probation under such circumstances, that not one of ten thousand millions ever escaped sin and condemnation to eternal death. It is, therefore, idle to assert that there is no evil inflicted on us in consequence of Adam's sin, antecedent to our own personal transgressions. It matters not what this evil is, whether temporal death, corruption of nature, "certainty of sin," or death in its more extended sense; if the ground of the evil's coming on us is Adam's sin, the principle is the same.

says, "by the depraved moral conduct of every infant who lives so long as to be capable of moral action."—P. 486, vol. i. Again, on p. 485, he says, this depravity is proved by the death of infants. "A great part of mankind die in infancy, before they are or can be capable of moral action; in the usual meaning of that phrase."

The question then is, is this evil of the nature of punishment? If it is, then the doctrine of imputation is admitted; if not, it is denied. The Spectator thinks this a mere dispute about words. We think very differently. A principle is involved in the decision of this question, which affects very deeply our views, not only of the nature of our relation to Adam, and of original sin, but also of the doctrines of atonement and justification: the most vital doctrines of the Christian system. The distinction, on which so much stress is laid by many who deny the doctrine of imputation, between mere natural consequences and penal evils, though it may be correct in itself, is not applicable to the case before us. An evil does not cease to be penal, because it is a natural consequence. Almost all the punishment of sin, is the natural consequence of sin: it is according to the established course of nature, (*i. e.* the will of God, the moral governor of the world,) that excess produces suffering, and the suffering, under the divine government, is the punishment of the excess. Sin produces, and is punished by remorse. The fire that "is not quenched," and "the worm that never dies," may, for what we know, be the natural effect of sin. It matters not, therefore, whether mortality in Adam and his descendants be a natural consequence of eating the forbidden fruit (from its poisonous nature,) which is a very popular theory, or whether death is a direct and positive infliction. Nor would it alter the case if native depravity was a natural result, as many suppose, of the same forbidden fruit, by giving undue excitability and power to the lower passions; because these effects result from the appointment of God, who is the author of the course of nature, and were designed by him to be the punishment of sin. We think the position of Storr is perfectly correct, that the consequences of punishment are themselves punishment, in so far as they were taken into view by the judge in passing sentence, and came within the scope of his design.—*Zweck des Todes Jesu*, p. 585.

But, admitting the correctness of this distinction, we do not see how it is applicable to the present case, that is, how Dr Dwight, and those who think with him, would make it appear, that the moral corruption of the whole human race, was the *natural* consequence of Adam's sin; much less how the Spectator can make it out, that "the universality and

certainty of sin," is the natural consequence of that offence. Indeed, he appears to abandon that ground, when he says, that this certainty is by "divine constitution." Here then is an evil, not even a natural consequence, our being born under a constitution which secures the certainty of our being sinners, and the ground or reason of this evil is of course not our own sin, but the sin of Adam. Is this evil a penalty? According to our view, it unquestionably is. It is an evil judicially inflicted on account of sin; it comes from God as the moral governor of the world. The Spectator, however, and many others, deny that the evils we suffer on account of Adam's sin are of the nature of punishment. The ground on which they do this, is, that it is utterly unjust, that the punishment due to one should, under any circumstances, be inflicted upon another. The assumption of this principle, without removing any difficulty, greatly aggravates the case, by representing that as a matter of sovereignty, which we regard as a matter of justice. The difficulty is not removed, for the difficulty is, that we should suffer for a crime which we never committed; but this the Spectator admits. The evil may be *materialiter* precisely the same, the question is now merely as to its formal nature. Is it then more congenial with the unsophisticated moral feelings of men, that God should, out of his mere sovereignty, determine that because one man sinned all men should sin; that because one man forfeited his favour, all men should incur his curse; or because one man sinned, all men should be born with a contaminated moral nature; than, that in virtue of a most benevolent constitution, by which one was made the representative of the whole race, the punishment of the one should come upon all? We know that a man's feelings are very much modified by his modes of thinking, and consequently, what shocks one person, may appear right and proper to another; and, therefore, these feelings can be no certain criterion in such a case as this. For ourselves, however, we are free to confess, that we instinctively shrink from the idea, that God in mere sovereignty inflicts the most tremendous evils upon his creatures, while we bow submissively at the thought of their being penal inflictions for a sin committed by our natural head and representative, and in violation of a covenant, in which, by a benevolent appointment of God, we were included. Besides, is it not necessary that a moral

being should have a probation, before his fate is decided? When had men this probation? Not, according to Dr Dwight, in their own persons, for they are born depraved, and consequently under condemnation. Not in Adam—for this supposes that his sin forfeited for us the divine favour, or is the ground of our condemnation; but this is imputation. Is it then more unjust to condemn mankind for the act of their natural representative, in whom they had a fair and favourable probation, than to condemn them without any such probation? Determine, out of mere sovereignty, to call them into existence depraved, and then condemn them for this depravity? Nor does the Spectator's view much relieve the difficulty. For a probation to be fair, must afford as favourable a prospect of a happy as of an unhappy conclusion. But men are brought up to their trial, under a "divine constitution" which secures the certainty of their sinning; and this is done because an individual sinned thousands of years before the vast majority of them were born. Is this a fair trial? Would not any man in his senses prefer to have his fate decided, by the act of his first father, in the full perfection of his powers, intellectual and moral, than to have it suspended on his own first faltering moral act of infancy, performed under a constitution which secures its being sinful? According to the Spectator, therefore, the probation of man is the most unfavourable possible for that portion of the race which arrives at moral agency; and those who die before it never have any, at least not in this world. The race as such is not fallen: for this implies the loss of original righteousness and of the divine favour. The former, however, was never possessed; the latter, by one half mankind, never forfeited, and for them no Saviour can be needed.

The principle, which the Spectator so confidently lays down, is, in our apprehension, decidedly anti-scriptural, subversive of important doctrines, and requires a mode of interpretation to reconcile it with the word of God, which opens the door to the utmost latitudinarianism. This expression of opinion is not intended *ad invidiam*; very far from it. If there is no foundation for this apprehension, the expression of it will pass unheeded; and if there is, it deserves serious consideration. The Spectator will agree with us in saying, that any objection brought against a doctrine taught in the

Bible, or supposed to be taught there, is answered if it can be shown to bear against the providence of God. If, therefore, the assertion, that it is unjust that one man should, under peculiar circumstances, suffer the penalty due to another, can be shown to militate with facts in the dispensation of the divine government, it is thereby answered. Is it then a fact, that the punishment due to one man, has ever, in the providence of God, been inflicted on others? We think no plainer case can be cited, or well conceived, than that of the fall itself. God threatened our first parent with certain evils in case of disobedience; he did disobey; the evil is inflicted not only on him, but on his posterity. If any part of this evil is antecedent to personal sinfulness, then the ground of it is Adam's sin. But it is admitted, on almost all hands, that some evil is inflicted antecedently to personal ill-desert; some say, it is temporal death, others corruption of nature, the Spectator certainty of sinning, (an awful infliction!) it matters not what it is, it is evil inflicted by a judge in the execution of a sentence—and that is punishment. We think, therefore, that it is arguing against an admitted fact, to maintain that one man can never bear the iniquity of another.

Although one instance, if fully established, is as good as a thousand to show that the principle of the Spectator is untenable, we may refer to others recorded in the scriptures. The case of Achan is one of these. The father committed the offence, and his whole family were put to death by the command of God. Was not the death of the children, in this instance, of the nature of punishment? It was evil, not a natural consequence, but a positive infliction, solemnly imposed on moral agents, by divine command, for a specific offence. It is on the ground of this and similar examples; as the punishment of Canaan for the act of Ham; of the sons of Saul for the conduct of their father, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 8, 14.; of the children of Israel for the sin of David, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 15 and 17; that Grotius, the jurist and theologian, says "Non esse simpliciter injustum aut contra naturam pœnæ, ut quis puniatur ob aliena peccata."—*De Satisfactione*, p. 312.

The objection, therefore, of the Spectator, founded on the supposed injustice of one man ever being punished for the sin of another, we consider as answered; first, because it bears with equal, if not with accumulated force,

against his own doctrine of evil consequences; and, secondly, because we think it militates with facts in the providence of God, and if valid, is valid against the divine administration.

We have other reasons, however, for the opinion which we ventured to express that the Spectator's principle was anti-scriptural. It contradicts the positive assertions of scripture, as we understand them. We can only refer to two instances of this kind. In the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from the twelfth verse to the twenty-first, we consider the apostle as not only asserting, but arguing on the principle that one man may bear the iniquity of another. His object is to illustrate the method of justification. As we have been condemned for a sin which is not our own, so are we justified for a righteousness which is not our own. That we have been thus brought under condemnation, he proves from the universality of death, the penalty of the law. This penalty was not incurred by the violation of the law of Moses, because it was inflicted long before that law was given; neither is it incurred, in all cases, by the actual violations of a law which threatens death, because it comes on those who have never actually violated any such law; therefore it is for the one offence of one man that the condemnatory sentence, (the *κρίμα εις κατακρίμα*,) has passed on all men. The disobedience of one man is no more simply the occasion of all men being sinners, than the obedience of one is merely the occasion of all becoming righteous. But the disobedience of the one is the ground of our being treated as sinners; and the obedience of the other is the ground of our being treated as righteous. This view of the passage, as to its main feature, is adopted by every class of commentators. Knapp, in his *Theology*, quoted above, sect. 76, in speaking of the doctrine of imputation, says, "That in the Mosaic history of the fall, although the word is not used, the doctrine is involved in the account." In the writings of the Jews, in the paraphrases of the Old Testament, in the Talmuds and rabbinical works, the sentence, "the descendants of Adam suffer the punishment of death on account of his first sin" frequently occurs, in so many words. This doctrine of imputation was very common among them, he says, in the times of the apostles. "Paul teaches it plainly, *Rom.* v. 12—14, and there brings it into connexion with the

christian doctrines. He uses, respecting it, precisely the same expressions which we find in the writings of the Rabbins." On the following page, in reference to the passage in *Rom. v. 12—14*, he says, that the doctrine of imputation is here more clearly advanced than in any other portion of the New Testament. "The modern philosophers and theologians," he remarks, "found here much that was inconsistent with their philosophical systems. They, therefore, explained and refined so long on the passage, that they at length forced out a sense from which imputation was excluded; as even Doederlein has done in his system of theology. They did not consider, however, that Paul uses precisely the same modes of expressions which were current among the Jews of that age respecting imputation; and that his cotemporary readers could not have understood them otherwise than as teaching that doctrine; and that Paul in another passage, *Heb. vii. 9, 10*, reasons in the same manner. Paul shows, in substance, that all men are regarded and punished by God as sinners, and that the ground of this lies in the act of *one* man; as, on the other hand, deliverance from punishment depends on one man, Jesus Christ." He immediately afterwards, says, that, unless force is done to the apostle's words, it must be acknowledged, that he argues to prove that the ground on which men are subject to death, is not their personal sinfulness, but "the imputation of Adam's sin."*

Zachariæ, of Goettingen, understands the apostle in the same manner. In his *Biblische Theologie*, vol. ii. p. 394, 395, he says, "Imputation with Paul is the actual infliction on a person of the punishment of sin; consequently the sin of Adam is imputed to all men, if there is any punishment inflicted on them on account of that sin. His whole reasoning, *Rom. v. 13, 14*, brings this idea with it. Sin is not imputed according to a law, so long as that law is not yet given; yet punishment was inflicted long before the time of Moses. His conclusion, therefore, is, where God punishes

* Knapp does not himself admit the doctrine of imputation, at least, not without much qualification. He does not deny the apostle's plain assertion of the doctrine, however, but gets over it by saying, that he is not to be interpreted strictly, but as speaking in a general and popular sense

sin, there he imputes it ; and where there is no punishment of a sin, there it is not imputed." "If God, therefore, allows the punishment which Adam incurred to come on all his descendants, he imputes his sin to them all. And in this sense Paul maintains that the sin of Adam is imputed to all, because the punishment of the one offence of Adam has come upon all." On page 386 he gives the sense of *Rom.* v. 18, thus, "The judicial sentence of God, condemning all men to death, has passed on all men, on account of the one offence of Adam." This is precisely our doctrine. It matters not, as far as the principle is concerned, how the *θανατος* in this passage is explained.

Whitby has the same view. He insists upon rendering *ἐφ' ᾧ*, "in whom," because, he says, "It is not true that death came upon all men, *for that*, or *because*, all have sinned. For the apostle directly here asserts the contrary, viz. That the death and condemnation to it which befel all men, was for the sin of Adam only." "Therefore the apostle doth expressly teach us that this death, this condemnation to it, came not upon us for the sin of all, but only for the sin of one, *i. e.* of that one Adam, *in whom all men die.*—1 *Cor.* xv. 22."

We refer to these authors merely to make it appear, that even in the opinion of the most liberalized writers, the plain sense of Scripture contradicts the principle of the Spectator, that one man can never be punished for the sin of another. This sense, we are persuaded, cannot be gotten rid of, without adopting a principle of interpretation which would enable us to explain away any doctrine of the word of God. The older Calvinists, as we have seen, considered the denial of imputation, or in other words, the assumption of the principle of the Spectator, as leading to the denial of original sin or native depravity. They were, therefore, alarmed when some of their French brethren rejected the former doctrine, though they at that time continued to hold the latter. Their apprehensions were not unfounded. Those who made this first departure from the faith of their fathers, very soon gave up the other doctrine, and before long relapsed into that state from which, after so long a declension, they are now struggling to rise. Without any intention of either casting unmerited odium on any of our brethren, or of exciting unnecessary apprehensions, we would seriously ask, if there is

no evidence of a similar tendency in the opinions of some brethren in this country. The doctrine of imputation has long been rejected by many, both within and without the bounds of our own ecclesiastical connexion, who still hold, with Dr Dwight, to native depravity, or that men are born "contaminated in their moral nature." How this can be just, or consistent with the divine perfections, if not a penal infliction, it is difficult to perceive. We are, therefore, not surprised to find that some of the most distinguished theologians of this school, now deny that there is any such contamination of nature; or that men are morally depraved before they are moral agents, and have knowingly and voluntarily violated the laws of God. These gentlemen, however, still maintain that it is certain that the first moral act in every case will be sinful. But this seems very hard: that men should be brought up to their probation, under "a divine constitution" which secures the certainty of their sinning. How this is to be reconciled with God's justice and goodness any better than the doctrine of Dr Dwight, we are unable to discover; and therefore apprehend that it will not long be retained. The further step must, we apprehend, be taken, of denying any such constitution, and any such dire certainty of sinning. And then the universality of sin will be left to be explained by imitation and circumstances. This, as it appears to us, is the natural tendency of these opinions; this has been their actual course in other countries, and to a certain extent, also, among ourselves. If our brethren will call this arguing *ad invidiam*, we are sorry for it. They do not hesitate, however, to say, that our opinions make God the author of sin, destroy the sinner's responsibility, weaken the influence of the gospel, and thus ruin the souls of men.

But if the Spectator's principle, that one man can never suffer the punishment of the sins of another is correct, what becomes of the doctrine of atonement? According to the scriptural view of this subject, Christ saves us by bearing the punishment of our sins. This, as we understand, is admitted. That is, it is admitted that this is the scriptural mode of representing this subject. Our brethren do not deny that the phrase "to bear the iniquity of any one," means to bear the punishment of that iniquity, as in the passage in Ezekiel, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," and in

a multitude of similar cases. Where, therefore, the Bible says, that "Christ bore our sins" it means, that he bore the punishment of our sins; or rather, as Grotius says, it cannot mean any thing else. "Peccata ferre patiēdo, atque ita ut inde liberentur alii, aliud indicare non potest, quam poenae alienae susceptionem."—P. 300. And not only the scriptures but even the Greek and Latin authors who use this phrase, he says, "semper imputationem includunt." This, however, on the Spectator's principle, must be explained away; and the ground be assumed, that the scriptures mean to teach us only the fact that Christ's death saves us, but not that it does so by being a punishment of our sins. But if this ground be taken, what shall we have to say to the Socinians who admit the fact as fully as we do? They say, it is by the moral impression it produces on us; our brethren say, it is by the moral impression it produces on the intelligent universe. If we desert the Bible representation, have they not as much right to their theory as we have to ours? This is a subject we cannot now enter upon. Our object is, to show that this is no dispute about words; that the denial of the doctrine of imputation not only renders that of original sin untenable; but involves, either the rejection or serious modification of those of atonement and justification.