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EDITED BY AN

*ASSOCIATION OF GENTLEMEN IN PRINCETON,  
AND ITS VICINITY.*

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*The Review of "Essays and Dissertations in Biblical Literature," which was promised in our last Number, did not come to hand in time to be inserted. We regret that such has been the case; and the article (which has been delayed in consequence of the distance of the writer from the press) may be expected in the number for July.—Ed. Bib. Rep.*

THE  
BIBLICAL REPERTORY, AND THEOLOGICAL  
REVIEW.

FOR APRIL 1830.

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CHURCH MUSIC.

*How shall a reform in the music of our churches be effected?*

In a former number of this Journal, we endeavoured to show, by comparing the original design of church music with the art in its present state, that a reform is both necessary and practicable. The argument, thus far, we presume, has been satisfactory. But here, in the minds of many, a serious difficulty presents itself. A good thing, which is in its own nature practicable, cannot always be carried into effect against the habits and prejudices of the community. To obviate this difficulty, it is necessary to show, somewhat in detail, how a reform can be effected. This is the object of the present article.

We shall take it for granted that in the present day of activity, some share of enterprise and self-denial might be easily enlisted in favour of a reform in church music, if once its full importance were to be distinctly seen. There are men in our country who know how to give an impulse that will be felt in every portion of the land. Only let it be seen that such an impulse is really needed, that the best interests of religion and of good order in the community require it, and the thing will be certainly done.

ject, on every proper occasion, in public and private. In short, let them endeavour to enlist the whole population of the land in voluntary associations, and in voluntary efforts, of all wise and lawful kinds, to put down so enormous an evil. But let them all be *voluntary*, entirely *voluntary*; and they will all be, unless I utterly mistake the character of the human mind, on that very account, the more acceptable and the more effectual.

2. Let all our churches be more careful than they have ever yet been to exercise vigilant and faithful discipline when any of their members subject themselves, in the least palpable degree, to the charge of intemperance. There have been by far too much indulgence and laxity on this subject in most of our churches. Aberrations of this kind have, in many cases, passed unnoticed, until they became habitual and gross. This ought no longer to be the case. Let the rulers of our churches be as watchful and decisive in calling to an account and censuring those who are visibly intemperate, as they usually are with respect to some other sins, not more destructive either to personal character, or to social order, than this, and the consequences will, undoubtedly, be happy.

*A Friend to Temperance Societies.*

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## REVIEW.

*Regeneration, and the Manner of its Occurrence. A Sermon from John v. 24. Preached at the Opening of the Synod of New York, in the Rutgers street Church, on Tuesday Evening, Oct. 20, 1829. By Samuel H. Cox, D.D. Pastor of the Laight Street Presbyterian Church. New York. 1829. Pp. 42.*

Voltaire, in one of his historical works, sneeringly inquires, "how were the priests employed while the Saracens were desolating the fairest portion of their church?" "Disputing," he answers, "whether Christ has one will or two!" It will be well, if the theologians of the nineteenth century do not furnish occasion to some future infidel historian for

a similar taunting remark. There is scarcely any subject in the history of the church which is more humiliating than that of theological discussions of this nature. The evil appears to have arisen early, for Paul, in his Epistles to Timothy, repeatedly and earnestly exhorts him, "not to strive about words to no profit," but to avoid "foolish questions, which gender strifes." Yet not a century has passed from that day to this, which has not been disturbed and disgraced by disputes fairly within the apostle's description. That there are serious evils attending controversies of this character, no one will deny. They bring discredit on religion; they alienate brethren who should live together in love; they call off the attention from the practical duties of benevolence and piety; and they are from their nature destructive of the spirit of true religion. These disputes, in nine cases out of ten, turn, not on the correct exposition of the Bible, but on the decision of some point in mental or moral science. Philosophy, instead of being the handmaid of religion, has become the mistress of theology. This is a fact deeply to be lamented. The subjects, we admit, are so nearly allied that they cannot be kept entirely distinct; still theology might have, and ought to have, much less of a philosophical, and more of an exegetical character than it has commonly assumed. The predominance of the former over the latter element in theology, has been unquestionably one of the most prolific sources of evil to the church. What is Pelagianism, Arminianism, or almost any other *ism* but a particular system of religious philosophy? And what are the questions which now alienate and divide christians in this country, but questions in mental or moral science? If a man tells you his theory of virtue, you need ask no questions about his theology. Hence it is that these diversities of opinion are in a great measure confined to professed theologians; clergymen or laymen. The views which ordinary christians, under the guidance of *common sense* and sanctified feeling, take of divine truth, are in all ages and countries very nearly the same. Nor does it seem to us correct to say, that common sense is nothing more than the popularized results of philosophical speculations, because we find it the same in countries where entirely different systems of philosophy have for ages prevailed. Look at Germany and England for an illustration. The philosophical theologians of these countries differ *toto calo* in their views. They

have hardly a single principle in common. But how is it with common christians? They are as much united in opinion as they are in feeling. And why? Because their opinions are formed from the Bible, under the guidance of the Spirit, and the influence of those essential and consequently universal principles of our nature, which it has been the grand result of philosophy to sophisticate and pervert. Is all philosophy then to be proscribed? By no means. The very statements we have made demonstrate its importance. If a man's speculative opinions do thus influence his views of religious truth and duty, it is a matter of unspeakable moment that these opinions should be correct. And in a multitude of cases, the only means of preventing the evils which flow from erroneous principles, is to show the fallacy of the principles themselves. Besides, all truth is harmonious, whether taught in the word of God or learned from the constitution of our own nature: and in itself there can be no subject more worthy of accurate knowledge, than that mysterious and immortal principle, which was created in the image of God. All this we cheerfully admit. At the same time the undeniable fact, that systems of philosophy have been as changeable as the wind; that each in its turn has been presented, urged and adopted with the utmost confidence; and each in its measure perverted the simple truths of the Bible, should teach us to be modest: it should teach us to separate the human from the divine element in our theology, and to be careful not to clothe the figments of our own minds with the awful authority of God, and denounce our brethren for not believing him when they do not agree with us. It should teach us too, not to ascribe to men opinions, which according to our notions may be inferred from the principles which they avow. This is an impropriety of very frequent occurrence, and of which we think we have great reason to complain in the sermon before us. To state what appear to us to be fair deductions from principles assumed, as arguments against them, is one thing; but to charge those who hold these principles with holding our deductions, is a very different affair.

With regard to the author of this sermon, we can truly say, that we entertain for him the highest respect. We love his honesty. We admire the frankness and decision with which he always avows his opinions. We rejoice to see that there is little of that evil spirit in the discourse which

so often converts investigations of truth into angry disputations. But while we give Dr Cox full credit for sincerity, and acquit him of entertaining any bad feelings towards his brethren, we still think that he is chargeable with grossly misrepresenting their opinions, and holding them up to a contempt and reprobation, due only to his acknowledged caricature. We refer specially to page 6, of the Introduction, where after stating that there are certain dogmas, "some of them not proved; or even suspected by those who employ them," which have a tendency "to solace the sinner in his distance from Christ," and "excuse his disobedience to the Gospel, and which ought to be rejected, as false and ruinous," he gives the following specifications:

"A man has no ability to do his duty.

"Where the means of grace are purely and abundantly vouchsafed, by the sovereign goodness of Providence, a man can do nothing for, but can only counteract, his own salvation; having no ability, even if he had the inclination, to believe the Gospel and be saved.

"The wickedness of men consists in physical defect or disorganization of the faculties of the soul, so that total depravity and physical depravity are nearly synonymous, and both equally true.

"Regeneration is the implantation of *a certain kind of* "principle of holiness," which is incapable of definition, or demonstration, and has no connexion with human consciousness; which precedes all active mental holiness, and is antecedent also to all "the fruit of the Spirit," as specified in the New Testament; in the susception and sustentation of which, the Creator is sole as well as sovereign agent; man no agent at all, but only a passive receiver, an unconscious subject, of the mysterious gratuity; and which is the happy contrary of a *principle of sin*, which is concreated with us, and is the permanent fund of all our depravity, in which also we are passive—though quite active in exercising all the wickedness which flows (full copiously) from such an inserted fountain, and which has its residence and location somewhere in the texture of the soul, which is itself a very wicked thing somehow physiologically, in the very nature of it, antecedent to any agency at all of ours.

"Regeneration consists in some secret physical motion on the soul, which restores its dislocated powers, and cures the connatural diseases of its texture; since the work of the Creator, as such, is not "good," but lays the foundation, in the very entity of the soul, for all its overt wickedness, and for the necessity of regeneration.

"The soul is passive, entirely passive, and God the sole agent, in regeneration.

"The means of grace, and the Gospel itself, are in no sense

moral causes of regeneration ; since their important use is merely to illustrate the strength of an invincible depravity, to make the sinner worse and worse, till he is physically regenerated, and then to signalize the prodigious efforts and labours of Omnipotence, in this department of constant miracle-working :—as if there were no considerable difference between dividing the Red Sea symbolically by the rod of Moses, and conciliating the human mind by the revealed glories of the *everlasting* Gospel !

“ It is wrong to require a sinner in the name of God to repent immediately, and believe the Gospel, and to urge him to this as the only way of salvation.

“ The offer of salvation is not made to every hearer ; or, if it be, to accept it is impracticable, and to require this of the sinner, wanton and absurd.

“ If there is a universal offer in the Gospel, it is founded—not on the atonement of Jesus Christ at all, but only on the ministerial commission ; or on human ignorance of who the elect are ; or it has no moral foundation ; or it is only man’s offer, and not God’s ; or it is a matter of mere sovereignty, and so insoluble ; or it is an offer in form, and in fact no offer or overture at all : and this, although there is no salvation known to the Gospel but that of our Lord Jesus Christ as an *atonement* Saviour. Prov. i. 20—33. Luke, xiv. 24. Acts, iv. 12 ; xiii. 26. 46.”

The Doctor then says, “ if I have caricatured these dogmas, I have done so intentionally : but only by representing them as they are, and making the reality govern the appearance.” It is not probable that Dr Cox, in writing these paragraphs, had any one class of theologians exclusively in his eye ; because some of “ these dogmas ” are inconsistent with each other. We have no doubt however that most of what is here stated, was intended as an exhibition of the doctrines of the old Calvinists (*sit venia verbo*). Our reason for thinking so is, that we are accustomed to see such, and even still more gross misrepresentations of these doctrines, though we acknowledge not often, from such men as Dr Cox. It is however notorious that this class of theologians are constantly represented as maintaining that “ man has no ability, even if he had the inclination, to believe the Gospel and be saved,”—that man’s depravity “ is a physical defect ”—that regeneration is “ a physical change,” &c. Representations have been made of these doctrines which we had supposed no man, who felt the obligation “ of interpreting language in conformity with the known and declared nature of the thing described,” could ever allow himself to make. Belonging as we do to the class, which for the sake of convenience and

distinction, we have called old Calvinists, we feel ourselves aggrieved by such representations, and called upon to show that no such doctrines can be fairly imputed to the elder Calvinists. It will not be expected that in a single article we should go over the formidable list presented by Dr Cox. We shall, for the present at least, confine ourselves to the doctrine of this sermon, and show that the old standard Calvinistic authors expressly disclaim the opinions here imputed to them, and that they are not fairly deducible from any of the principles which they avow. Should we entirely fail as to the second point, it would still be very unjust to charge men with holding doctrines, which they constantly disclaim, because we consider them as flowing from their principles.

The two main points of Dr Cox's sermon are, first, that regeneration is a moral, in distinction from a physical change; and secondly, that it occurs in a manner perfectly accordant with the active powers of the soul. We use the word physical, not as synonymous with natural, but in the sense in which it is used in this sermon, implying something referring to the substance or essence. By physical regeneration in this sense, is intended a change in the essence or essential properties of the soul, or, in the language of Dr Cox, an influence by which "the conatural diseases in the texture of the soul are healed." Our object is to show that Dr Cox has misrepresented the views of his brethren on this subject; that they hold to no change in the substance of the soul nor in any of its essential properties, but uniformly teach that the change is a moral one, and takes place in a manner perfectly congruous to the nature of a rational and active being. We appeal to the language and doctrines of all the old Calvinistic divines, in support of this assertion.

Charnock, in his discourse on regeneration, contained in Vol. II. of the folio edition of his works, proposes in the first place to state in reference to the nature of this change, what it is not. On page 72, he says, "It is not a removal or taking away of the old substance or faculties of the soul. Some thought that the substance of Adam's soul was corrupted when he sinned, therefore suppose the substance of his soul to be altered when he is renewed. Sin took not away the essence but the rectitude; the new creation therefore gives not a new faculty but a new quality." Who the "some" were, to whom Charnock refers, as holding that the substance of Adam's soul was corrupted by the fall, we know

not; all we know is that such is not the doctrine of any respectable body of Calvinists, nor of any standard writer on the subject. The only man of whom we have heard, who taught this doctrine, was Flaccius Illyricus, Professor at Jena, and a pupil of Luther; but we know too, that his opinions on this subject were condemned, almost without a dissenting voice, by the reformed theologians of Germany and England.

On the 73d page, Charnock says expressly, "the essence and faculties remain the same." "The passions and affections are the same as to the substance and nature of the acts; but the difference lies in the objects." "When a man loves God, or fears God, or loves man, or fears man, it is the same act of love and the same act of fear; there are the same motions of the soul, the same substantial acts simply considered," &c. "This new creation is not a destruction of the substance of the soul, but there is the same physical being, and the same faculties in all, and nothing is changed in its substance as it respects the nature of man." P. 85. We have here a most explicit disavowal of the doctrine of physical regeneration in the sense in which Dr Cox represents the old Calvinists as holding it.

As to the manner in which this work is effected, he remarks, in the first place, that "it is a secret work, and therefore difficult to explain." "Yet, secondly, this is evident, that it is rational, that is, congruous to the essential nature of man. God does not deal with us as beasts, or as creatures destitute of sense, but as creatures of an intelligent order. Who is there that believes in Christ, as heavy things fall to the earth, or as beasts run at the beck of their sensual appetites without rule or reason?" P. 217. "God that requires of us a reasonable service, would work upon us by a reasonable operation. God therefore works by the way of a spiritual illumination of the understanding, in propounding the creature's happiness by arguments and reasons; and in the way of a spiritual impression on the will, moving it sweetly to embrace that happiness, and the means to it which he doth propose; and indeed without this work preceding, the motion of the will could never be regular." P. 218.

In speaking more particularly of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the will, his first proposition is, that there is such an influence; second, that "this work, though immediate, is not compulsive. It is a contradiction for the will to be moved unwillingly: any force upon it destroys its nature.

It is not forced because it is according to reason, and the natural motion of the creature; the understanding proposing and the will embracing; the understanding going before with light, the will following after with love." "The will being a rational faculty cannot be wrought upon but rationally." P. 221.

The instrumentality of the truth in regeneration is strongly asserted by all old Calvinists. Charnock says, "that to make an alteration in us according to our nature of understanding, will and affections, it is necessary there should be some declaration of things under those considerations of true, good and delightful, in the highest manner, to make a choice change in every faculty of the soul; and without this a man cannot be changed as a rational creature," &c. P. 233. "The word operates, first, objectively, as it is a declaration of the will of God, and presenting the objects of all holy acts; and secondly, it has an active force. It is operative in the hand of God for sanctification." "The spirit doth so edge the word that it cuts to the quick, discerns the very thoughts, insinuates into the depths of the heart," &c. P. 235. "To conclude, the promise in the word breeds principles in the heart suitable to itself; it shows God a father and raises up principles of love and reverence; it shows Christ a Mediator, and raises up faith and desire. Christ in the word conceives Christ in the heart, Christ in the word the beginning of grace conceives Christ in the heart the hope of glory." P. 236. The use of the word in regeneration is surely according to this view something more than "the rod of Moses stretched out over the Red Sea." We presume, however, that the paragraph in which Dr Cox denounces the opinion that the means of grace have no tendency to produce holiness, was designed for a different quarter. Old Calvinists have generally been charged with laying too much stress on the use of means.

Charnock was by no means singular in the views here expressed. Living as he did in the days of the Puritan ascendancy in England, the companion of Owen, Goodwin, Burgess, Bates, and many others of the same class, he was united with them in opinion as well as in labours.

Owen, in his work on the Spirit, when speaking of regeneration, lays down the following proposition, (p. 270 of the folio edition). "In whom or towards whomsoever the Holy Spirit puts forth his power, or the acts of his grace for their

regeneration, it removes all obstacles, overcomes all opposition, and infallibly produces the effect intended." But how is this done? Is it by changing the substance of the soul or violating any of the laws of its being? The words which immediately follow, and which are intended to explain this general proposition contain the answer. "The power which the Holy Spirit puts forth in our regeneration, is such in its actings or exercise, as our minds, wills and affections are suited to be wrought upon, and to be affected by, according to their natures and natural operations. He doth neither act in them any otherwise than they themselves are meet to be moved and to move, to be acted and to act, according to their own nature, power and ability. He draws us with the cords of a man, and the work itself is expressed by a persuading; 'God persuade Japhet; I will allure her into the wilderness and speak comfortably;' for, as it is certainly effectual, so it carries no more repugnancy to our faculties than a prevalent persuasion doth." One can hardly imagine how men who use such language can be charged with holding a "physical regeneration," by which, "the connatural diseases of the texture of soul" are cured. Owen proceeds to say, secondly, that the Holy Spirit "doth not in our regeneration possess the mind with any enthusiastical impressions; but he works on the minds of men in and by their own natural actings, through an immediate influence and impression of his power. 'Create in me a clean heart, O God.' He worketh to will and to do. Thirdly, he therefore offers no violence or compulsion to the will. This that faculty is not naturally capable to give admission unto. If it be compelled it is destroyed." And again on the next page, "the Holy Spirit who in his power and operation is more intimate, as it were, unto the principles of our souls than they are to themselves, doth, with the preservation and in the exercise of the liberty of our wills, effectually work our regeneration and conversion unto God. This is the substance of what we have to plead for in this cause, and which declares the nature of this work of regeneration, as it is an inward spiritual work."

Bates's view of the manner in which this change is effected, is the same with that of Owen. In the fourth volume of his works (octavo edition) page 140, he says, "the effectual operation of grace does not violate the native freedom of the will, but is congruous to it. God's drawing is by teach-

ing: 'every one who hath heard and learned of the father cometh unto me.' When the author of the Gospel is a teacher of it, the most stupid and obstinate sinners shall be convinced and obedient." Again, "God draws sinners to himself 'with the cords of a man,' in a rational way without violence to their faculties, and fastens them by the bonds of love." In another place, Vol. II. p. 298, he says, "the Holy Spirit does not work grace in us, as the sun forms gold in the earth, without any sense in ourselves of his operations: but we feel them in all our faculties congruously to their nature, enlightening the mind, exciting the conscience, turning the will, and purifying the affections."

The opinions of the reformed, or Calvinistic divines of Germany and Holland were the same on these points, as those of the Calvinists of England. Turretin, *Theol. Elenct.* loc. 15, quæst. 4, § 15, says, "*Gratiæ efficacis motio non est simpliciter physica, quia agitur de facultate morali, quæ congruenter naturæ suæ moveri debet; nec simpliciter ethica, quasi Deus objective solum ageret et leni suasionem uteretur, quod pertendebant Pelagiani: sed supernaturalis est et divina, quæ transcendit omnia hæc genera.*" "*Potens est, ne sit frustranea; suavis est, ne sit coacta. Vis est summa et inexpugnabilis ut vincatur naturæ corruptio et summa bene agendi impotentia ac male agendi necessitas: sed amica tamen et grata, qualis naturam intelligentem et rationalem decet.*"

The Synod of Dort, in order to prevent any misapprehension of their views of efficacious grace, as though it were inconsistent in its operation with the rational and moral powers of our nature, say in reference to the fourth article in dispute between them and the Remonstrants, "*Sicuti vero per lapsum homo non desiit esse homo, intellectu et voluntate præditus, nec peccatum, quod universum genus humanum pervasit, naturam generis humani sustulit, sed depravavit et spiritualiter occidit: ita etiam hæc divina regenerationis gratia, non agit in hominibus tanquam truncis et stipitibus, nec voluntatem ejusque proprietates tollit, aut invitam violenter cogit, sed spiritualiter, sanat, corrigit, suaviter simul et potenter flectit: ut ubi antea plene dominabatur carnis rebellio et resistentia nunc regnare incipiat prompta ac sincera spiritus obedientia; in quo vera et spiritualis nostræ voluntatis libertas consistit.*"

Spanheim, in his *Elench. Controv. cum August. Confess.*

Theol. Oper. tom. iii. col. 909, after stating how nearly the views of the Lutheran divines coincided with those of Calvinists on this subject, says that the difference which did exist seemed to result from a misapprehension of the calvinistic doctrine. *Supponunt precario*, he says, 1. "Nos velle per gratiam insuperabilem, motionem coactam, violentam, qualis trunci, lapidis, &c. 2. Negare nos resistibilitatem gratiæ respectu naturæ corruptæ, et carnis Deo inimicæ, qua sanè quantum in se est nimis resistit."

Stapfer, in his *Institut. Theol. Polem. Cap. III. § 136*, maintains in unison with the common mode of speaking among Calvinists of his day, that there was in regeneration a divine illumination of the understanding, and a divine influence on the will. What he intended by these expressions he carefully explains. "Per illuminationem autem intelligimus convictionem supernaturalem veritatum revelatarum, et nexus illarum distinctam repræsentationem." And this, he says, though certainly producing conviction, offers no more violence to the mind than the demonstration of a proposition in geometry. "Neque magis, (are his words) hominis libertati obesse potest, ac illi aliquid derogatur, si sole post tenebras redeunte objecta circumjacentia ipsi clare repræsentantur, aut si de veritate geometrica per illius demonstrationem convincitur." With regard to the influence which operates on the will, he says, "Pono ita agit, ut homo in determinatione sua liber maneat, neque obtorto quasi collo et invitus trahitur; facit ut homo volens agat. Veritatem tam clare mentibus ingerit, ut non possint non assentiri, et tanta motiva voluntati suggerit, ut non possit nolle, sed featur: Pellexisti me Jehova, et plectus sum, fortior fuisti me, et prævaluisti. Jer. xx. 7."

This he asserts over and over, is the true calvinistic doctrine. This he does, not only in his chapters on Pelagianism and Arminianism, where he is answering precisely the same objection, which (and it is one of the wonders of the age) Calvinists are now urging against Calvinism, viz. that efficacious grace, as explained by them, is inconsistent with the nature of man as a rational and responsible creature; but also in his chapter *De Consensu et Dissensu Protestantium*, and in his preliminary statement of the general truths of theology.

We fear that we have already exhausted the patience of our readers, in proving a point concerning which every one

acquainted with Calvinistic writers must have been satisfied before we began. We hope however that our labour will not be regarded as altogether unnecessary; because when an imputation comes from a source in every way so respectable, and in fact so highly respected, the inference will be, that in sober truth old Calvinists do hold, that the texture of the soul is diseased; that its substance is changed in regeneration; that some unknown violence to its faculties is suffered under the Spirit's influence. It is proper, therefore, that it should be shown, that the direct reverse of all this is distinctly declared by them to be their opinion; that they profess to believe regeneration to be a moral and not a physical change; and that it takes place without any violence being done to the soul or any of its laws. Our readers too will be led, we trust, to think with us, that there should be something more than mere inferential reasoning, to justify ascribing to men a set of opinions which they constantly and earnestly disclaim.

We are perfectly willing to admit, that old Calvinists, when treating on the subject of regeneration, often speak of a direct and physical influence of the Spirit on the soul. But in what sense? In the sense in which Dr Cox represents them as holding physical regeneration? Far from it. He says that physical regeneration and physical depravity stand together. He thus uses the word as qualifying the effect produced. They use it to qualify the influence exerted in producing the effect. But what do they mean when they speak of a physical influence being exerted on the soul in regeneration? They mean precisely what we suppose Dr Cox means, when he speaks of "the agency of the Spirit, apart from the power of the truth, which is his instrument." P. 27. They mean to assert that regeneration is not effected by mere moral suasion; that there is something more than the simple presentation of truth and urging of motives. The idea of Calvinists uniformly was, that the truth, however clearly presented or forcibly urged, would never produce its full effect without a special influence of the Holy Spirit. This influence they maintained was supernatural, that is, above the mere moral power of the truth, and such as infallibly to secure the result, and yet, to use their own illustration, did the soul no more violence than demonstration does the intellect, or persuasion the heart. This opinion is not confined to any one class of Calvinists:

as far as we know it is common to them all. We understand Dr Cox as teaching the same doctrine. In fact we know no Calvinist who denies it. The author of the review, in the last number of the *Christian Spectator*, of the strictures of Dr Tyler on some previous articles in that work, says, "We have never called in question the doctrine of an immediate or direct agency of the Spirit, on the soul, in regeneration." This is all the old Calvinists intended by physical influence. That this assertion is correct is evident from the fact that they taught, as we have seen above, that this influence is perfectly "congruous" to the nature of the soul, doing it no more violence than, in the language of Owen, "an effectual persuasion doth;" and that it produces no physical change in the substance of the soul or any of its faculties. Unless therefore we mean to interpret their language, not according to their clear and often repeated statements of their meaning, but according to the sense which a particular expression has attained among ourselves, we must admit that no part of the proof of the charge which we are considering can be made to rest on the occurrence of the phrase "physical influence," in their writings. But there is still further evidence that our assertion on this subject is correct, which is derived from the fact, that it is in controversy with those who taught that there was no influence beyond "moral suasion" and "common grace" exerted in regeneration, that the older writers maintained what they sometimes called a physical influence of the Spirit\*.

Turretin, in the passage quoted above, describing the nature of the influence exerted in regeneration, says, that it is not merely a moral influence, such as the Pelagians contend for, but supernatural and divine; and immediately adds, "aliquid de ethico et physico participat," where it is plain that it is in opposition to the Pelagian doctrine that he uses this expression; precisely as Dr Cox would do the words, direct and immediate. When the Remonstrants arose, they objected strongly to the modes of expressions which had become common among the Reformed theologians on the subject of efficacious grace. This led to a more precise state-

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\* This expression however is by no means so common as that of "direct and immediate influence," and is so carefully guarded as to prevent any justifiable mistake as to its meaning.

ment of what their real doctrines were on this subject, and they uniformly repelled the imputations of their opponents that they taught that this influence was inconsistent with the rational nature of the soul. They very unwillingly used even the word irresistible, which they said was no word of their selection, but was put upon them by the Jesuits and Remonstrants. It afterwards indeed became very common; but they tell us they intended by it, nothing more than, certainly efficacious. Stapfer, cap. 17, p. 540, says, in answer to such objections, that when the Reformed speak of irresistible grace, "hoc volunt, ita efficaciter divinam gratiam operari, ut hominis resistantiam infallibiliter superet, *ut sausio ipsius* tantæ sit efficacïæ ut homo non possit non velle summaque spontaneitate sequi." The necessity or certainty as to the result for which they contended, was none other than that for which president Edwards and all other Calvinists contend, and which is inconsistent with no other theory of liberty than that of indifference. If any man would candidly compare one passage with another in the writings of old Calvinists, and interpret their language agreeably to the fair rules of construction, there could be no doubt as to their meaning, by physical influence, what Dr Cox, we presume, means by "an influence apart from the truth." Charnock, in speaking on this subject, says, in the general, that the work is secret, yet "congruous to the essential nature of the soul." He then states more particularly, first, that there is "an immediate and supernatural work on the will:" as synonymous with this expression he on the next page uses the words "physical operation." His second proposition is, that "this work, though immediate, is not compulsive and by force." "The will being a rational faculty cannot be wrought upon but rationally," is one of his assertions, in explanation of his idea of this immediate influence. "God, who knows how to make a will with a principle of freedom, knows how to work upon the will, without intrenching upon or altering the essential privilege he bestowed upon it," is another. His third position is, that this immediate work, "is free and gentle." "A constraint not by force, *but love.*" "It is sweet and alluring: the Spirit of grace is called *the oil of gladness*; it is a ready and delightful motion which it causes in the will; it is a sweet efficacy, and an efficacious sweetness." Is this "to paralyze the soul, or to strike it through with a moral panic?"

Surely Dr Cox will regret having made such a representation of the views of men whose opinions as to *the nature* of divine influence do not differ one tittle from his own. "At what time," Charnock goes on to say, "God doth savingly work upon the will, to draw the soul from sin and the world to himself, it doth with the greatest willingness, freedom and delight, follow after God, turn to him, close with him, and cleave to him, with all the heart, and with purpose never to depart from him. Cant. i. 4. *Draw me, and we will run after thee*: drawing signifies the efficacious power of grace; running signifies the delightful motion of grace: the will is drawn, as if it would not come; it comes, as if it were not drawn. His grace is so sweet and so strong, that he neither wrongs the liberty of his creature, nor doth prejudice his absolute power. As God moves necessary causes, necessarily; contingent causes, contingently; so he moves free agents freely, without offering violence to their natures. The Spirit glides into the heart by sweet illapses of grace, and victoriously allures the soul. Hos. ii. 14. *I will allure her, and speak to her heart*; not by crossing, but changing the inclination, by the all conquering and alluring charms of love," &c. 222. The fourth proposition is, that this influence is "insuperably victorious," or, in other words, irresistible. In what sense is it irresistible? Let the following explanation from Charnock in this immediate connexion answer, and prevent those brethren reproaching us for a word, who agree with us as to the thing intended. "As the demonstration of the Spirit is clear and undeniable, so the power of the Spirit is sweet and irresistible; both are joined, 1 Cor. ii. 4. An inexpressible sweetness allures the soul, and an unconquerable power draws the soul; there are clear demonstrations, charming persuasions, and invincible efficacy combined in the work. He leaves not the will in indifference. (This is what they were arguing against.) If God were the author of faith only by putting the will into indifference, though it be determined by its own proper liberty, why may not he also be said to be the author of unbelief, if by the same liberty of indifference it be determined to reject the Gospel?" "*This irresistibleness takes not away the liberty of the will.* Our Saviour's obedience was free and voluntary, yet necessary and irresistible." "Is God not freely and voluntarily good, yet necessarily so? He cannot be otherwise than good; he will not be otherwise than good. So the will

is irresistibly drawn, and yet doth freely come to its own happiness." It is perfectly evident therefore that nothing more was intended by this expression than what president Edwards and all other Calvinists contend for, viz. moral or philosophical necessity. Now when it is remembered that all the expressions which we have quoted, and much more of the same import, are used in explanation of the nature of that divine influence by which regeneration is effected, we think that our readers will feel, that the strongest possible evidence should be required, to sustain the charge against those who use them, of holding doctrines utterly inconsistent with their most clearly expressed opinions. We think that any candid man will acknowledge, who should take the trouble to read the writings of the older Calvinists, that they held no other doctrines on the subject of divine influence than such as are common among all classes of opposers of Arminianism. Their "supernatural" or "physical" influence meant nothing more than what is now intended by "a direct and immediate influence." Owen, whose language on this subject is as strong as that of any writer with whom we are acquainted, states clearly, as we have already seen, his belief that the influence for which he contended, is perfectly "congruous" to the nature of the soul. He tells us also, page 257, that it is against the Pelagian theory that he is arguing when he maintains that moral suasion alone does not effect our regeneration, but that there is a direct agency of the Spirit in the work, which is such "as our minds, wills and affections are suited to be wrought upon and affected by, according to their natures and natural operations."

But if old Calvinists held such opinions, (and they hold them still,) on "the nature of regeneration and the mode of its occurrence," where is the difference between them and Dr Cox? None in the world, as far as these general statements go. His general propositions, that regeneration is a moral, and not a physical change, and that it takes place in a manner accordant to the nature of the soul, are as orthodox as Owen or Charnock could wish them. We take it for granted, however, that Dr Cox would think we had treated him rather unhandsomely thus to convict him of *old* orthodoxy. We proceed therefore to state where the difference really lies. It is simply this. All the old Calvinists, and the great majority, we hope and believe, of the new school also, hold

that the *result* of the Holy Spirit's operation on the soul, is a holy principle or disposition; Dr Cox says, if we understand him, that the result is a holy act. This is the whole ground of debate, and to lookers on it may appear rather too narrow to be worth disputing about. Dr Cox however seems to think that this is a subject of vital importance, affecting deeply our views of the whole system of divine truth, and our manner of preaching; involving the high questions of the grounds of man's accountability, the nature of sin and holiness, and of human liberty. And here we are sorry to say we agree with him. We are afraid that this is a turning point. We do not see how it is possible to hold together the tattered shreds of Calvinism, if this ground be assumed. Is Calvinism then a mere metaphysical system? We think not. But there are some metaphysical opinions utterly inconsistent with it; that indifference is necessary to the freedom of the will is one, and that morality consists in acts only, we fear is another.

All the ground that we have for supposing that Dr Cox holds this latter opinion, is found in the pamphlet under review. And even here it is not distinctly asserted; but it seems to be constantly implied, and to be the foundation of all that is peculiar in the sermon or introduction. The principle assumed is, that there is nothing in the soul but its substance with its essential attributes, and its acts. Therefore, if regeneration be not a change in its acts, it must be a change in the substance. If sin be not an act, then it is substance, "an entity," "a disease of the texture of the soul." This, we take it, is the ground of the imputation, that Calvinists believe in physical depravity and physical regeneration; for if this principle be not assumed, there is not even the slender and insufficient ground of these doctrines being deducible, in the author's opinion, from Calvinistic principles, to justify the charge. Besides, every one knows that this is the ground on which this charge has been made before, in a manner far more offensive and unfair than Dr Cox is capable of making it. It is on this ground, also, we presume that Dr Cox maintains that the soul is as active in regeneration, as in repentance or the exercise of faith. And it is on this ground, we suppose, that he ridicules the idea of regeneration being the production of a holy principle in the soul, "the happy contrary," as he calls it, "of a principle of sin, which is concreated with us." This view of the doctrine

of regeneration, (that it is the production of a holy principle,) he says, can "command the confidence of no well disciplined mind," (rather a bold assertion by the way,) and then adds, "By holy principle *I* mean love to God, and not any thing antecedent to it; and by love to God, *I* mean loving him; and in that the subject is active."

Dr Cox, we believe, pins his faith to no man's sleeve, and is the follower of no party. His opinions are his own; but what they are we pretend not to know, further than they are developed in this discourse. He has here brought forward the charge against many of his brethren, whom he loves, and who love him, of believing in physical depravity and physical regeneration. On what grounds he rests the charge we have no means of ascertaining, but from the opinions advanced in this discourse. We are anxious to show, that, as far as old Calvinists are concerned, the imputation is unfounded. And we think that we have shown, to the satisfaction of every candid reader, that these doctrines are constantly and explicitly disclaimed by this class of theologians. When it is asserted, therefore, in the face of such positive declarations to the contrary, that they do entertain these opinions, it can only be on the ground that they are fair inferences from the principles which they avow. This, though a very improper ground for a direct imputation, is all, we are persuaded, that can exist. How Dr Cox would endeavour to make it appear that these are fair inferences, we do not know, and therefore do not wish to be considered, in our further remarks on this subject, as having reference to Dr Cox's theological opinions any further than they are distinctly avowed in this sermon. Our object is simply this; to endeavour to show that the Calvinistic doctrine, that regeneration consists in the production of a holy habit or principle in the soul, fitting and disposing it to holy acts, is not liable to the charge here advanced.

It will not be necessary to take up much time or space in proving that the doctrine of regeneration, as just stated, is that which is held by old Calvinists. Charnock, p. 85, Vol. II, says, "This new creation consists in gracious qualities and habits, which beautify and dispose the soul to act righteously and holily." Owen says the new creation is "an habitual holy principle wrought in us by God, and bearing his image," or, as in the next sentence, "a divine supernatural principle, of spiritual actions and operations."

We prefer however referring to the statements of a few of the theologians of our own country, some of whom do not belong to the class which, for the sake of convenience, we have called old Calvinists. *President Edwards* not only admits that moral principles or habits may and must exist in the soul prior (in the order of nature) to moral action, but his whole system of practical theology, as it seems to us, rests on this foundation. The great fundamental principle of his work on the Affections is this:—All gracious or spiritual affections presuppose and arise from spiritual views of divine truth. These views the natural man neither has, nor can have, while he remains such. Hence arises the necessity of such a change being wrought in the state of the soul, that it can perceive the real beauty and excellence of divine things. This change consists in imparting to the soul what he calls “a new sense,” or a new taste, or relish, or principle, adapted to the perception and love of spiritual excellence. Were we to attempt to exhibit all the evidence which might be adduced, in proof of the fact that his views were such as we have represented, we should be obliged to quote a great part of the work just mentioned. We refer the reader especially to what he says on the first and fourth signs of gracious affections. With regard to the nature of regeneration, we quote only a single passage. After having stated that the exercises of the true Christian are specifically different from those of unsanctified men, he infers that if the exercises are different, the principle whence they proceed must be different, or there must be, “as it were, a new spiritual sense, or a principle of new kind of perception or spiritual sensation.” And he hence explains why it is that “the work of the Spirit of God in regeneration is often, in Scripture, compared to giving a new sense, giving eyes to see, and ears to hear, unstopping the ears of the deaf, and opening the eyes of them that were born blind, and turning them from darkness unto light.” The nature of this “new sense” he thus explains.

“This new sense, and the new dispositions that attend it, are no new *faculties*, but are new *principles* of nature. I use the word *principles*, for want of a word of a more determinate signification. By a *principle of nature*, in this place, I mean that foundation which is laid in nature, either old or new, for any particular kind or manner of exercise of the faculties of the soul; or a natural habit, or foundation for

action, giving a person ability and disposition to exert the faculties in exercises of such a certain kind; so that to exert the faculties in that kind of exercises, may be said to be his nature. So this new spiritual sense is not a new faculty of understanding, but it is a new foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of understanding. So that new holy disposition of heart that attends this new sense, is not a new faculty of will, but a foundation laid in the nature of the soul, for a new kind of exercises of the same faculty of will. The Spirit of God, in all his operations on the minds of natural men, only moves, impresses, assists, improves, or some way acts upon natural principles; but gives no new spiritual principles.”\*

We have never met with a stronger, or more formal statement of the doctrine which we are endeavouring to support, than is found in this passage. And it should be considered that this is not a passing remark on the part of president Edwards, or the statement of an isolated opinion, but it is a fundamental principle of his whole theology, as we understand it. Take this away, and his whole theory of original righteousness, original sin, of the nature of holiness, and the nature of sin, and of the liberty of the will, go with it. Whether his views on these subjects are correct, although the main question, is one thing, but that he really entertained the opinion here so clearly expressed, we wonder that any man should ever have doubted. We trust that respect for the memory of president Edwards, and the obligation “to interpret language according to the known and declared nature of the thing described,” will prevent any one saying, that he believed that “this new sense” is an entity, or “this foundation” for moral exercises is “something inserted in the soul,” “an agent within an agent,” &c. &c.

Dr Bellamy seems to teach the same doctrines as president Edwards with regard to spiritual blindness, the necessity of divine illumination prior to the exercise of any holy affections, and the nature of regeneration. In the second volume of his works, page 502, he says, “In regeneration, there is a new, divine, and holy taste begotten in the heart, by the immediate influences of the Holy Spirit.” And on the opposite page, “The idea of a natural beauty supposes an internal

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\* Treatise concerning Religious Affections, p. 231, 232. Elizabethtown edition, 1787.

sense, implanted by our Creator, by which the mind is capacitated to discern such kind of beauty." "And that the idea of spiritual beauty supposes an internal spiritual sense, communicated to the soul by the Spirit of God, in the work of the new creation, is clearly illustrated and proved by a late divine, whose praise is in all the churches." He here refers his readers to Edwards on Religious Affections.

Dr Dwight taught the same doctrine, and that clearly and definitely. In his discourse on the nature of regeneration,\* he says, "This change of heart consists in a relish for spiritual objects, communicated to it by the power of the Holy Ghost." That "this relish" was antecedent, according to his view, to all holy acts, there can be no doubt. Because he expressly asserts it, and because his arguments go to prove it. What he calls "a relish for spiritual objects" he elsewhere calls a holy disposition, and refers to the case of Adam for an illustration of its nature. "When God created Adam," he remarks, "there was a period of his existence after he began to be, antecedent to that in which he exercised the first volition. Every man who believes the mind to be something besides ideas and exercises, and does not admit the doctrine of casualty, will acknowledge, that in this period the mind of Adam was in such a state, that he was propense to the exercise of virtuous volitions rather than of sinful ones. This state of mind has been commonly styled disposition, temper, inclination, heart, &c. In the Scriptures it usually bears the last of these names. I shall take the liberty to call it disposition. This disposition in Adam, was the cause whence his virtuous volitions proceeded; the reason why they were virtuous, and not sinful. Of the metaphysical nature of this cause I am ignorant; but its existence is, in my view, certainly proved by its effects." Again, on the same page, "In regeneration, the very same thing is done by the Spirit of God for the soul, which was done for Adam by the same Divine Agent at his creation. The soul of Adam was created with a relish for spiritual objects. The soul of every man who becomes a christian, is renewed by the communication of the same relish. In Adam, this disposition produced virtuous volitions. In every child of Adam, who becomes the subject of virtue, it produces the same effects."

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\* Works, Vol. II. p. 418.

The same idea is expressed, if possible, even more formally in the same volume, p. 451, where, among other things equally explicit, he says that by this disposition he intends "the cause, which in the mind of man produces all virtuous affections and volitions." The same doctrine is repeatedly taught in other passages of his works, as in the sermons on the Probation of Man, Vol. I. 394, on the Fall, 410, 413, on Depravity as derived from Adam, &c.

From various passages which occur in the pamphlet of Dr Tyler, already mentioned, we infer that he holds the same doctrine. The same principle, (that moral disposition may exist antecedently to all moral acts), is also frequently and clearly asserted by Dr Woods of Andover, in his controversy with Dr Ware. We refer to the opinions of these distinguished men, to show how united Calvinists, old and new, are in their views on this point, and that if the charge of believing in physical depravity and physical regeneration be sustained, it lies on almost the whole Calvinistic world. Still the main question recurs—is the charge well founded?

The main principle, as before stated, which is assumed by those who make this charge is, that we can only regard the soul as to its substance on the one hand, and its actions on the other. If, therefore, there be any change wrought in the soul other than of its acts, it must be a physical change. And if any tendency, either to sin or holiness, exist prior to choice, it is a positive existence, a real entity. Thus the charge of physical depravity and physical regeneration is fairly made out. We are constrained to confess, that if the premises are correct, the conclusions, revolting as they are, and affecting, as they do, the fair names of so large a portion of the christian church, are valid. The principle itself, however, we believe to be a gratuitous assumption. It is inconsistent with the common, and as we believe, correct idea of habits, both connatural and acquired. The word habit (*habitus*) was used by the old writers precisely in the same sense as "principle" by president Edwards, as explained above, or disposition, as used and explained by president Dwight. That there are such habits or dispositions which can be resolved neither into "essential attributes," nor "acts," we maintain to be the common judgment of mankind. Let us take for illustration an instance of an acquired habit of the lowest kind, the skill of an artist. He has a soul with the same essential attributes as other men; his body is composed of the same materials; and the same law regulates the

obedience of his muscular actions to his mind. By constant practice he has acquired what is usually denominated skill; an ability to go through the processes of his art, with greater facility, exactness and success than ordinary men. Take this man while asleep or engaged in any indifferent occupation, you have a soul and body not differing in any of their essential attributes from those of other men. Still there is a difference. What is it? Must it be either "a real existence, an entity," an act, or nothing? It cannot be "an entity," for it is acquired, and it will hardly be maintained that a man can acquire a new essential attribute. Neither is it an act, for the man has his skill when it is not exercised. Yet there is certainly "something," which is the ground of certainty, that when called to go through the peculiar business of his art, he will do it with an ease and rapidity impossible for common men. It is as impossible not to admit that this ground or reason exists, in order to account for the effect, as it is not to admit the existence of the soul to account for its exercises. By constant practice, a state of mind and body has been produced adapted to secure these results, and which accounts for their character. But this is the definition of principle or habit as given above. A single circumstance is here wanting which is found in other "habits," and that is, there is not the tendency or proneness to those particular acts to which this state of mind is adapted. This difference, however, arises not from any difference in the "habits" themselves, but from the nature of the faculties in which, so to speak, they inhere. A principle in the will (in its largest sense, including all the active powers) is not only a state of mind adapted to certain acts, but prone to produce them. This is not the case, at least to the same degree, with intellectual habits. Both classes, however, come within the definition given by president Edwards and Dr Dwight,—"a state of mind," or "foundation, for any particular kind of exercise of the faculties of the soul." The same remarks may be made with regard to habits of a more purely intellectual character. A man, by devoting himself to any particular pursuit, gradually acquires a facility in putting forth the mental exercises which it requires. This implies no change of essence in the soul; and it is not merely an act, which is the result of this practice. The result, whatever it is, is an attribute of the man under all circumstances, and not merely when engaged in the exercises whence the habit was acquired.

But to come nearer to the case in hand. We say a man has a malignant disposition, or an amiable disposition. What is to be understood by these expressions? Is it merely that he often indulges malignant or amiable feelings? or is it not rather that there is an habitual proneness or tendency to their indulgence? Surely the latter. But, if so, the principle stated above, that we can regard the soul only as to its substance or its actions, cannot be correct. For the result of a repetition of acts of the same kind, is an abiding tendency, which is itself neither an act, (eminent or imminent,) nor an "entity." Here then is the soul with its essential attributes—an habitual tendency to certain exercises, and the exercises themselves. The tendency is not an act, nor an active state of the feelings in question; for it would be a contradiction to say, that a man whose heart was glowing with parental affection, or filled for the time with any other amiable feeling, had at the same moment the malignant feelings in an active state; although there might exist the greatest proneness to their exercise. We have seen no analysis of such dispositions, which satisfies us that they can be reduced to acts. For it is essential to the nature of an act, that it should be a matter of consciousness. This is true of those which are imminent acts of the will, or ultimate choices, (by which a fixed state of the affections is meant to be expressed,) as well as of all others. But a disposition, or principle, as explained above, is not a matter of consciousness. A man may be aware that he has a certain disposition, as he is aware of the existence of his soul, from the consciousness of its acts, but the disposition itself is not a subject of direct consciousness. It exists when the man is asleep, or in a swoon, and unconscious of any thing. Neither can these habits be with any propriety called a choice, or permanent affection. For in many cases they are a mere proneness to acts which have their foundation in a constitutional principle of the mind. Our object at present is merely to show, that we must admit that there are mental habits which cannot be resolved either into essential attributes of the soul, fixed preferences, or subordinate acts; and consequently, that those who believe in dispositions, prior to all acts, do not necessarily maintain that such dispositions are of the essence of the soul itself. If it be within the compass of the divine power to produce in us that, which by constant exercise we can produce in ourselves, then a holy principle or habit may be the result of the Spirit's influence

in regeneration, without any physical change having been wrought.

But it is not only objected, that regeneration is a physical change, if any thing beyond a change in the exercises of the soul is effected; but it is said, that the thing contended for is utterly unintelligible, incapable of definition or explanation. We are ready to acknowledge that it admits of no other explanation than that which is derived from stating its effects, and referring to cases of an analogous kind. There is in all men a social principle, as it is called, which is something else than a desire to live in society, because it is connatural, as may be inferred from its universality; there is a tendency in all men to love their children, which is something besides loving them; there is a tendency in man also to sympathise in the sufferings of others, &c. It may be said these are all constitutional tendencies implanted in our nature. This is very true; but does saying this enable us to understand their nature? May it not be objected to those who employ this language, You are using words without meaning; what do you know of a social principle, distinct from the actual desire to live in society, or prior to its exercise? What idea can you form of a principle of self-love excepting actually loving one's self? Are we then to deny that there are any such original propensities or tendencies as these implanted in our nature, because we cannot directly conceive of them? Yet Dr Cox says, in reference to this subject, "By holy principle, I mean love to God, and by love to God I mean actually loving him." On the same principle, he might deny the existence of any of the original dispositions or tendencies of the soul. For they are as incapable of being defined, as the holy principle which is produced in regeneration. The soul itself is in the same predicament. We know nothing of it, but from our consciousness of its acts. And if the objection, which we are now considering, be valid against the existence of principles prior to acts, then it is valid against the existence of the soul. We are conscious only of its exercises; and therefore some philosophers and theologians tell us, we are not authorized to go any further. The existence of a substance apart from the exercises is not necessary to account for their existence, and therefore is a gratuitous assumption. An assumption, too, of the being of something which we are incapable of defining, explaining, or even conceiving. The reply which Dr Cox would make to this reasoning, is proba-

bly the same that we should be disposed to make to his objection against the existence of holy principles prior to holy acts. For the mind as instinctively seeks a reason for the choice which the soul makes in loving God, as it does for the various ideas and exercises of which it is constantly conscious. And we should probably be as little satisfied with the reasons which Dr Cox could assign to account for this choice, as he would be with those of the defenders of the exercise-scheme to account for these exercises without resorting to a thinking substance. If he were to say, that the effect is produced by the Holy Spirit, we should answer that this can only be done in one of three ways, that we can conceive of. First, either by his direct agency producing the choice, in which case it would be no act of ours; or, secondly, by addressing such motives to our constitutional and natural principle of self-love as should induce us to make the choice, in which case there would be no morality in the act; or, thirdly, by producing such a relish for the divine character, that the soul as spontaneously and as immediately embraces God as its portion, as it rejoices in the perception of beauty. The thing contended for is not more unintelligible than a hundred things of like nature. Taste is the ready perception and quick feeling of natural beauty. That is, these are its effects. But no one can directly conceive of it, as it is an attribute of the mind, either original or acquired. It is absolutely certain, however, that the man who does thus readily perceive and feel the beauty of natural objects, has a quality of mind which a clown does not possess. And we should be astonished to hear any one maintain, that there was no such thing as taste, but the exercise. "By taste I mean the love of beauty, and by love of beauty I mean actually loving it, and that is an act, and not a principle." But why does one man see and feel a beauty in certain objects, when others do not? Is there no difference between the clown and the most refined votary in the arts, but in their acts? Is any man satisfied by being told that one loves them, and the other does not; that it is in vain to ask why; the fact is enough, and the fact is all; there is no difference in the state of their minds antecedent to their acts; there can be no such thing as a principle of taste, or sense of beauty, distinct from the actual love of beauty? We are disposed to think that no man can believe this: that the constitution of our nature forces us to admit, that if one man, under all cir-

cumstances, and at all times, manifest this quick sensibility to natural beauty, and another does not, there is some difference between the two, besides their acts; that there is some reason why, when standing before the same picture, one is filled with pleasure, and the other is utterly insensible. We cannot help believing, that one has taste, (a quality, principle, or "inward sense,") which the other does not possess. It matters not what it may be called. It is the ground or reason of the diversity of their exercises, which lies back of the exercises themselves, and must be assumed to account for the difference of their nature. Now, there is moral, as well as natural beauty, and it is no more unintelligible, that there should be a "sense," or taste, for the one, than for the other. The perfect character of God, when exhibited to different men, produces delight and desire in some, repugnance in others. We instinctively ask why? Why do some perceive and delight in his moral beauty, while others do not? The answer, some love, and others do not, is no answer at all. It is merely saying the same thing, in other words. There must be some reason, why one perceives this kind of beauty, to which others are blind; why one is filled with love the moment it is presented, and the other with repugnance. And this reason must lie back of the mere exercise of this affection, must be something besides the act itself, and such as shall account for its nature.

It may be said, however, that the cases are not analogous: that the emotion excited by beauty is involuntary, while moral objects address themselves to the voluntary affections; and that it is admitted, that there is not only "something" back of each exercise of love, but we are told distinctly what it is, viz. the soul with its essential attributes, its ultimate or supreme choice, or dominant affection, and the object in view of the mind. Accordingly, it is easily accounted for, that when the character of God is presented, one man is filled with love, another with repugnance. The reason of the difference in *these* acts, does indeed lie back of the acts themselves; for it is found in the ultimate or supreme choice of the different individuals. But how is this to be accounted for? If there is no necessity for accounting for the particular character of the first or ultimate choice, (if so it must needs be called,) there is no need of accounting for the others. The difficulty is not at all met by this statement. It is only pushed back, from the secondary and subordinate, to the pri-

mary and dominant preference. There it returns. The question still is, why does the soul of one man make this supreme choice of God, or, in other words, love him, while another sets his affections on the world? There is precisely the same necessity for assuming some ground or reason for the nature of the first choice, as for any acts subordinate and subsequent to it. Let us suppose two individuals called into existence, in the full maturity of their faculties; each has a soul with the same constitutional powers, or essential attributes; the one is filled with delight the moment the character of God is presented, and the other is not; or the one loves his Maker as soon as the idea of his excellence is presented, the other does not. According to this theory, there is no reason for this difference. There is nothing back of the first act of choice that is not common to both. If instead of two individuals, we suppose two millions, one portion having their affections spontaneously called forth on their first view of their Maker, the other unaffected; we have only a greater number of effects without a cause, but the case is the same. It will not do to answer, that the choice is made under the influence of the desire of happiness, for this being common to all, is no reason for the difference of the result, which is the very thing to be accounted for. To say that the choice is made under the influence of the desire of happiness, is only to say, that when the character of God is presented, it gives pleasure. But the same character is presented in both cases, the same desire exists in both, yet in one it gives pleasure, is an object of desire; in the other, not. This is the fact which is left entirely unaccounted for on the theory in question, and for which the mind as instinctively seeks a question, as it does for any other effect. To account for the difference from the nature of agency, is to assume the liberty of indifference. For if the choice be made prior to the rising of desire towards the object, then it is made in indifference, and is of no moral character. If the desire rise, it is love; which is the very thing to be accounted for. We are at a loss to see how this theory is to be reconciled with the Calvinist's doctrine on the will, which is not peculiar to Edwards, but constituted the great dividing line between Calvinists and Arminians from the beginning. We feel, therefore, a necessity for assuming, that there is "something" back of the first moral act, besides the soul and its essential attributes, which will account for the nature

of that act, which constitutes the reason, why, in the case supposed, the soul of the one individual rose immediately to God, and the other did not; and the "something" assumed in this case, is no more indefinite and undefinable, than the constitutional propensity to live in society, to love our children, or the mental quality called taste, all which are assumed from a necessity not more imperious than that which requires a holy principle to account for the delight experienced in view of the character of God. And if our Maker can endow us not only with the general susceptibility of love, but also with a specific disposition to love our children; if he can give us a discernment and susceptibility of natural beauty, he may give us a taste for spiritual loveliness. And if that taste, by reason of sin, is vitiated and perverted, he may restore it by the influences of his Spirit in regeneration. Neither, therefore, the objection, that what is not an act, must be an essential attribute; nor the unintelligible nature of a "principle of nature," is, in our view, any valid objection to the common doctrine on regeneration.

There is a third objection, however, to this doctrine, and that is, that it renders the sinner excusable, because it makes regeneration to consist in something else than the sinner's own act. This objection, as it seems to us, can only be valid on one or the other of two grounds: the first is, that the common doctrine supposes sin to be a physical defect, and regeneration a physical change; and the second is, that a man is responsible solely for his acts, or that there can be no moral principle anterior to moral action. With regard to the first, it is enough to say, that no physical change, according to the constant declaration of Calvinistic writers, is held to take place in regeneration, and that no such change is implied in the production of a holy principle, as we have already endeavoured to show.

The second ground is inconsistent with the common notions of men, on the nature of virtue, and if true, would render the commencement of holiness or regeneration impossible. It is according to the universal feeling and judgment of men, that the moral character of an act depends upon the motive with which it is done. This is so obviously true, that Reid and Stewart, and almost all other advocates of the liberty of indifference, readily admit it. And so do the advocates of the theory on which this objection is founded, with regard to all moral acts, excepting the first. All acts

of choice, to be holy, must proceed from a holy motive, excepting the first holy choice which constitutes regeneration; that may be made from the mere desire of happiness or self love. We confess that this strikes us as very much like a relinquishment of the whole system. For how is it conceivable, that any thing should be essential to the very nature of one act as holy, that is not necessary to another? Is not this saying that that on which the very nature of a thing depends may be absent, and yet the thing remain the same? Is it not saying that that which makes an act what it is, and gives it its character, may be wanting or altered, and yet the character of the act be unaffected? It is the motive which gives the moral character to the act. If the motive is good, the act is good; if the motive is bad, the act is bad; if the motive is indifferent, so is the act. The act has no character apart from the motive. This, it seems, is admitted with regard to all moral acts excepting the first. But the first act of a holy kind is an act of obedience, as well as all subsequent acts of the same kind. How then is it conceivable that the first act of obedience performed from the mere desire of happiness or self love can be holy, when no other act of the same kind, and performed from the same motive, either is or can be? How does its being first alter its very nature? It is still nothing more than an act done for self-gratification, and cannot be a holy act. It is said we must admit this from the necessity of the case, or acknowledge that there can be holiness before moral action. We prefer admitting the latter, and believing that "God created man upright," and not that he made himself so. That there was a disposition or relish, or taste for holiness, before there was any holy act, which to us is far more reasonable than that an act is holy because the first of a series, which, if performed from the same motive at a different point of the line, would have a different character. The grand objection, we know, that is made to all this is, that holy beings have fallen, which it is maintained would be impossible if the ground here assumed is correct. If the character of an act depends on its motive, a sinful act cannot be performed by a being in whom sin does not already exist; and, consequently, neither the fallen angels, nor Adam, could ever have apostatized. We think, however, that there is a broad difference between the commencement of holiness, and the commencement of sin, and that more is necessary for the former than for the lat-

ter. An act of obedience, if it is performed under the mere impulse of self-love, is virtually no act of obedience. It is not performed with any intention to obey, for that is holy, and cannot according to the theory precede the act. But an act of disobedience performed from the desire of happiness is rebellion. The cases are surely widely different. If to please myself I do what God commands, it is not holiness; but if to please myself I do what he forbids, it is sin. Besides, no creature is immutable. Though created holy, the taste for holy enjoyments may be overcome by a temptation sufficiently insidious and powerful, and a selfish motive or feeling excited in the mind. Neither is a sinful character immutable. By the power of the Holy Spirit the truth may be so clearly presented, and so effectually applied, as to produce that change which is called regeneration. That is, as to call into existence a taste for holiness, so that it is chosen for its own sake, and not merely as a means of happiness.

It is evident, therefore, that the theory which denies the possibility of moral distinctions being carried back of acts of choice, forces its advocates to adopt the opinion that the first holy act is specifically different from all others. That Adam was not created holy, but by choosing God made himself holy, and that this choice, though made with no holy motive or intention, but merely from a desire of happiness, has a moral character. This we think not only contradictory to the express declaration of Scripture, which says that man was created in the image of his Maker, (which includes his moral as well as his natural image, as we are taught in the New Testament), but is inconsistent with the very first principles of morals, as it teaches that an act performed without any good intention or motive is yet holy. It seems to us liable, also, to this further objection, that it represents man's obligation to love God, to rest upon the fact that it will promote his happiness. This is involved in the principle, that the choice made from this motive is a good choice; for it can only be good as it is in obedience to a moral obligation. If the obligation fulfilled is to God, then to fulfil it must be the motive. If the motive which prompts the choice have reference to himself, then the only obligation which he fulfils, is to himself. It is a wise decision, but it is no holy act. If it be said that the excellence of the choice lies in the nature of the object chosen, it is giving up the question. For if the excellence of the object be the

ground of the choice, it can act as a motive only by exciting a desire for it as excellent, which must needs be a holy desire, and if this determines the choice, then the man is holy before he chooses God as his portion, and the choice is the result, and not the cause of his holiness. Or if we call the desire itself the choice (which is an incorrect use of terms) still the case is the same. For the best definition that can be given of a holy being is, that holy objects excite in him desire, as soon as they are presented. If Adam therefore was filled with desire and pleasure, as soon as his mind rested on the character of God, then he was created holy. As we remarked above, this theory, that the first moral act is not performed from a holy motive, but from the constitutional desire of happiness, is not only inconsistent with the nature of a holy act, but affords no relief in the case. For the difficulty still remains, why the character of God should appear desirable to one being, and not to another, if both are called into existence in *puris naturalibus*.

That Adam was created holy, that is, with a holy disposition which existed prior to his first holy act, though necessarily destructive of the very first principle of the theory referred to, has been considered as a fixed point among Calvinists. We have already seen that Dr Dwight did not think it necessary to prove it. Because he says, "every man who believes the mind to be something more than ideas and exercises, and *does not admit the doctrine of casualty*, will acknowledge" it. President Edwards, in his work on original sin, has a whole chapter, in which he endeavours to prove that our first parents were created in righteousness, or, as he expresses it, "with holy principles and dispositions." The grand objection against this doctrine, he says, is this: "that it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of virtue, that it should be concreated with any person; because, if so, it must be by an act of God's absolute power, without our knowledge or concurrence; and that moral virtue, in its very nature, implieth the choice and consent of the moral agent, without which it cannot be virtue and holiness: that a necessary holiness, is no holiness," and he quotes from Dr Taylor of Norwich, the words, "Adam must exist, he must be created, yea he must exercise thought and reflection before he was righteous." To this he replies, "In the first place, I think it a contradiction to the nature of things, as judged of by the common sense of mankind. It is agreeable to the

sense of the minds of men in all ages, not only that the fruit or effect of a good choice is virtuous, but the good choice itself, from which that effect proceeds; yea, and not only so, but also the antecedent good disposition, temper, or affection of mind from whence proceeds that good choice is virtuous. This is the general notion, not that principles derive their goodness from actions, but that actions derive their goodness from the principles whence they proceed; and so that the act of choosing that which is good, is no further virtuous than it proceeds from a good principle, or virtuous disposition of mind; which supposes, that a virtuous disposition of mind may be before a virtuous act of choice; and that therefore *it is not necessary that there should first be thought, reflection and choice before there can be any virtuous disposition.* If the choice be first, before the existence of a good disposition of heart, what signifies that choice? There can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love, ambition, or some animal appetite." P. 140. If there was a holy disposition, before there was "thought, reflexion or choice," Edwards most assuredly carried moral distinctions back of moral acts. That by so doing he carried them into the "essential attributes of the soul," is an assertion founded on the assumption, that what is not an act must be an essential attribute, which we believe few are prepared to admit. God has created man with various susceptibilities, dispositions or tendencies of mind towards objects without himself; these tendencies are not necessarily "real existences, entities," or essential attributes, for tendencies or habits may, as before remarked, be acquired, as the skill of an artist, or a proneness to any particular mental exercise. They may result from the relative state of all the essential attributes, and yet be no "part of the soul" themselves. Their nature, however, is confessedly as inconceivable as the nature of the soul, and no more so; and they are as necessarily assumed to account for the results which meet our view, as the soul or any of its attributes. If a million of intelligent beings, the first moment they think of the character God, are filled with desire and delight, it is as evident that they were created with a proneness or disposition to take pleasure in holiness, as it is that the hearts of mothers have an innate tendency to love their children, because they glow with delight the first moment

they are given to them. Nothing we think but the most determined adherence to a speculative opinion, can prevent any man acknowledging that it is as possible for the mind to be created with this "instinctive" love of holiness, as with a disposition for any other specific class of objects. And we think too, that the vast body of men will agree with president Edwards in thinking, that "such a disposition's being natural, or from a kind of instinct, implanted in the mind in its creation," is no objection to its being of a virtuous or moral character. Does the maternal instinct cease to be amiable, because it is natural? Does a disposition to kindness and gentleness lose its character by being innate? Are not the instinctive love of justice, abhorrence of cruelty, admiration of what is noble, which God has implanted in our nature, objects of approbation? If our feelings and the general sense of mankind answer these questions in the affirmative, they as certainly will decide that an innate disposition to love God, existing in the mind of Adam at the moment of his creation, does not lose its moral character by being innate. The common feelings and judgment of men, therefore, do carry moral distinctions back of acts of choice, and must do so unless we deny that virtue ever can commence, for "there can, according to our natural notions, be no virtue in a choice which proceeds from no virtuous principle, but from mere self-love."

If this be so, the very foundation of the objection that the common doctrine of regeneration destroys the responsibility of the sinner, is taken away. This responsibility rests upon the fact, that he stands in the relation of a rational and moral creature to God. He has all the attributes of a moral agent—understanding, conscience and will. He has unimpaired the liberty of acting according to his own inclinations. His mind is not subject to any law of causation, which determines his acts independently of himself. Motives, as external to the mind, have no influence, but as the mind itself, according to the laws of all rational creation, is affected by them and *voluntarily* admits their influence, and yields to it. The responsibility of man, therefore, resting on the immutable obligations which bind him to love and obey God, and on the possession of all the attributes of moral agency, is not destroyed by his moral depravity, of which the want of a disposition to holiness is an integral part. He does not love God, not because there is any physical defect

in his constitution, but because his moral taste is perverted by reason of sin. He is so corrupt, that even infinite loveliness appears hateful to him. There can, in the nature of things, be no reason why an intelligent and moral being, should be blind to moral excellence, excepting moral corruption. And if this be an excuse, then the more depraved, the less he is to blame. How he became thus depraved, is another question,—but it has nothing to do with the point before us, which is, the nature of the inability which it involves to love God. He may have been born so, or he may have made himself so. It makes no difference as to this point. So long as this depravity is his own, his own moral character, it can furnish no excuse or palliation for not complying with the great command of the law and gospel. An object worthy of all affection is presented to his view, viz: the divine character; he is capable of intellectually apprehending this object. If blind to its loveliness it is, in his own judgment, and that of all men, his sin; it is the very height of corruption to view as unlovely what is the perfection of moral beauty. That men do labour under this moral blindness, is one of the most frequently asserted doctrines of the Scriptures. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” “These things,” says our Saviour, “will they do unto you, because they have not known the father nor me.” “To know God, is eternal life.” We are said to be saved through knowledge. The gospel is “hid to them that are lost.” Their eyes are blinded. Light has shined into the hearts of those that believe. The saints of old prayed to have their minds illuminated; and Paul intercedes for his fellow Christians earnestly and frequently for this blessing, as the only possible means of their sanctification. This is so plain, that president Edwards, in speaking on this subject, says, “There is such a thing, *if the Scriptures are of any use to teach us any thing*, as a spiritual, supernatural understanding of divine things, that is peculiar to the saints, and which those who are not saints know nothing of.” (P. 293, On the Affections.) The cause of this blindness is sin, and therefore it is inexcusable. But if it exists, there is an evident necessity for such a change in the soul, that it shall be brought to see this beauty of holiness, and from the constitution of our nature, this change must precede the exercise of love. For how can we love that

which we do not see. The affections must have an object, and that object must be apprehended in its true nature, in order to be truly loved. It is obvious, therefore, that regeneration, to be of a moral character at all, must consist in such a change as brings the soul into a state to see and love the beauty of holiness. It matters not what the change be called; a "spiritual sense," or "a taste," or "disposition," it is as necessary as that an object should be seen in order to be loved.

Now it is evident that all this must be denied by those who make regeneration to consist in the "act of loving God," who deny that there is any change prior in the order of nature, to the exercise of love. For if the sinner is blind to God's loveliness, it is absolutely impossible that he should love it, until he is brought to see it. It may be said, that this is to render the sinner's case absolutely hopeless. So it is. And they do but delude and mock him, who represent it otherwise. It is thus the Bible represents it. It tells him that the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. And it is moreover necessary, that the sinner should be brought to feel, that his case, as far as he himself is concerned, is absolutely hopeless; that he may be brought to fall, with his blind and wicked heart, at the feet of sovereign mercy, and cry, Lord, save me! or I perish. But does this make the sinner excusable? not unless his sin is his excuse. It is this, and this alone, which prevents his perception of the loveliness of God, and, therefore, the more complete his blindness, the greater his loathsomeness and guilt. The two sentiments of complete helplessness, and of entire blame-worthiness, are perfectly consistent, and are ever united in Christian experience. The believer feels them every day. He knows that it is his duty, at once, to love God as purely, and fervently, and constantly, as do the saints made perfect. Yet he feels that no mere efforts of his own, no use of means, no presentation of motives, no summoning of his powers, will ever enable him to raise his carnal heart to heaven. Does this free him from a sense of guilt? No. He covers his face with both his hands, and bows down in the dust, and cries, Behold, I am vile. Have mercy on me, O Lord, and create within me a clean heart.

That the denial of the sinner's blindness, to the holiness of God, is involved in the theory of regeneration, under consideration, is perfectly evident, and is not, we presume, de-

nied. If the mere choice of God, as the supreme portion of the soul, is regeneration, and the performance of this act constitutes the change, then of course no previous change is admitted to be necessary to enable him to make the choice; no opening of his eyes to see the moral excellence of the object he is to choose, no production of any sense of its loveliness; the choice itself is all that is demanded; and for this, every thing is present that the act requires. The object, the capacity of viewing it in its true moral excellence, and the motive whence the choice is to proceed. For he need not choose God from any holy motive or intention, (which would be to make holiness precede moral action), the simple desire of happiness is all that is required. The character of this first act does not depend on its motive. It is holy, though performed merely from the desire of self-gratification. This is a conclusion from which our minds instinctively revolt, and which Edwards says, is contrary to the natural notions of men. It is, however, a conclusion which is legitimate and acknowledged, and, being in our view, a complete *reductio ad absurdum*, the system is fairly, in our humble apprehension, *felo de se*.

Dr Cox asks whether it is not "intrinsically absurd," that a man should be regenerated before he does his duty? We think the absurdity is all the other way, that he should do his duty without being regenerated. That he should love God without having any proper perception of his character; or that an unholy soul should have this perception of the beauty of holiness. It appears to us a contradiction in terms to say, that a holy object can be viewed as excellent and desirable by a carnal mind; for a holy mind is best defined by saying, that it perceives and relishes the beauty of holiness. It is inconceivable to us, therefore, that any sinner should love God, without this previous change, except on one or the other of these two grounds; that all his acts are created in him, and he is really no agent at all, or that an act proceeding from mere self-love is holy. Both which contradict what to us are primary principles or intuitive truths. But how is it that regeneration precedes the exercise of love? As the opening of the eyes precedes sight; as a sense of the beautiful precedes the emotion of beauty; as the maternal instinct precedes maternal love. As it is impossible for a man to have his eyes open in the day time without seeing, so it is impossible for a man to be regenerated without delighting

in God. Yet opening the eyes is not seeing, nor is regeneration delighting in God. What the metaphysical nature of this change is, no one can tell. All the soul can say, is, whereas I was blind, now I see. What once appeared repulsive and "foolishness," now appears supremely desirable and excellent. What once excited enmity, now calls forth love. What once was irksome and difficult, is now easy and delightful. To say that these exercises themselves constitute the change, and the whole change, is to say, that a wicked man is suddenly transformed in all his views, feelings, and conduct, without any reason for it. And to refer all to the immediate operations of the Spirit, is to make man a machine, a mere instrument, on which a mysterious hand plays what tune it pleases, to the delight or torment of the conscious, but passive subject.

There is still another point. Dr Cox speaks of this "certain kind of principle," as "a mysterious gratuity," with which the receiver has nothing to do. A something inserted in the soul in some magic manner to influence his exercises, but which forms no part of his character. We are persuaded that a fundamental difference, as to the nature of agency, and human liberty, lies at the foundation of all such objections. We are as yet only fighting in the dark. The real turning point is yet in the back ground. We do not mean that it is intentionally kept there, but that these objections have not even the semblance of force, if (what is yet considered common ground) the Calvinistic theory of the will is retained. Was it a mere "mysterious gratuity," without moral character for him, that Adam was created in the image of God "with holy principles and dispositions?" Were these not voluntary principles? Was he not free in all his exercises of love determined by them? A disposition is not the less voluntary because it is innate. The affections are all voluntary, although concreated with us. Is a man less free in loving himself because self-love is a constitutional propensity? Does a mother love her child against her will, because she acts agreeably to her nature? Does not the disposition so to do enter into her character? If this be true with regard even to constitutional propensities, it is still more obviously true with respect to moral disposition, whether originally implanted or restored in regeneration. There is a continual play upon the double sense of the word voluntary. When the faculties of the

soul are reduced to understanding and will, it is evident that the latter includes all the affections. In this sense, all liking or disliking, desiring or being averse to, &c., are voluntary, or acts of the will. But when we speak of the understanding, will and affections, the word will includes much less. It is the power of the soul to come to a determination, to fix its choice on some object of desire. These two meanings are distinct, though they may relate only to different states of the same faculty. In the latter sense, will and desire are not always coincident. A man may desire money, and not will to take it, or to make it an object of pursuit; he may not fix his choice upon it. The will is here determined by some other desire of greater force; desire of doing right, for example. When we speak of a volition, of a choice, of a decision or determination of the will, the word will is used in the restricted sense. A man may have many objects of desire before his mind; the decision which the will makes among them, or its selection, is its choice. There are a thousand things capable of ministering to our happiness; riches, honour, sensual pleasure, the service of God; the selection which the soul makes, is made by the will in the narrower sense. This is a voluntary act, in one sense of the term. But in another, the desire itself which the soul has for these objects, and not merely its decision or choice, is a voluntary act. For, according to Edwards, "all choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, *liking*, *disliking*, directing, commanding, *inclining*, or being averse, *a being pleased*, or *displeased with*;" are acts of the will. In this sense, all the affections, and all desires are voluntary exercises, whether constitutional or not, and not merely the decisions to which they lead. Hence self-love, the love of children, the love of society, the desire of esteem, are all voluntary, although all springing from native tendencies of the mind.

This distinction between these different senses of the word will, although frequently made, and formally stated, is yet, time after time, lost sight of in discussions of this nature; which gives rise to endless confusion. The word is often used in one sense in the premises of an argument, and in the other in the conclusion. How often is it said that a man can love God if he will? What does this mean? If will be here used, in its narrower sense, this is not true. The affections no more obey a determination of the mind,

than the emotions do. A man can no more will to love, to hate, to be pleased or displeased, than he can will to be joyful or sorrowful, gay or sad, or even hot or cold at any given moment. But if the word be taken in its larger sense, as including the affections, then the proposition is identical; it is saying, a man can love God, if he does love God. And when Dr Cox says, there are some men who teach, that a man has no ability to believe, even if he has the inclination; the very statement is absurd. For if the mind is inclined to embrace the truth in its real character, it does believe.

Although the advocates of the theory, that morality attaches only to acts of choice, lay down, as the foundation of their doctrine, Edwards' definition of the will as given above, yet it is plain, that in a multitude of cases, they confine acts of choice to acts of the will in the restricted sense. Thus the desire of money becomes avarice, they say, only when the will comes in and decides on money as the main object of pursuit. Self-esteem is not pride, until the will decides on preferring our own claims unduly. In all such cases, it is the will, as the faculty of decision between different objects of desire, that is intended. It is to acts of the will in this restricted sense, and to the states of mind thence resulting, and not to voluntary acts in the broad sense of president Edwards, that morality is made to attach. Hence in the case of Adam, the desire excited by a view of the divine perfections, has no moral character. That belongs only to the act of the will, which fixes on God as the chief good. And the first holy act of a new-born soul is not the desire which rises in view of the divine Being, but the act of the will by which he is chosen as a portion. Hence, in the distinction between constitutional and voluntary propensities, the social affections, the love of children, desire of esteem, &c. are referred to the former class, and are not considered as voluntary. Yet in the broad sense of the word will, assumed as the foundation of the theory, according to which, all "inclining or being averse," all "being pleased, or displeased with," are acts of the will, they are as truly voluntary as the others. Now, when it is asserted, that no disposition is of a moral character, except so far as it depends on choice or preference, and that all morality lies in the will, the whole mean-

ing turns on the sense in which the word will is taken. If taken in its broader sense, this would be admitted; if in the restricted sense, we should deny it altogether. Those who make the assertion, doubtless take it in the latter; for they say that all that precedes the decision of the soul, its fixing on some object of desire as its chief portion, is neither sinful nor holy; that holiness consists in the selection of God and sin in the choice of the world, and that there is nothing sinful or holy but these primary or ultimate choices, and the subordinate acts resulting from them. But it is clear that the term voluntary applies not only to such acts of choice, but to all exercises of the affections or desires preliminary thereto. No one would say that the disposition to love ourselves, or our children, depends on choice; and yet these dispositions are properly and truly voluntary. We cannot love otherwise than voluntarily. When, therefore, these gentlemen use the word voluntary, it is in reference to acts of the will in the restricted sense, excluding the spontaneous exercises of the native propensities of our nature. They of course deny that Adam was created holy. The spontaneous rising of desire in his mind to God, was neither holy nor unholy. His moral character commenced with the first act of choice, that is, with his selection of God from among the various sources of happiness as his chief good. Here lies one great point of difference between them and common Calvinists. President Edwards maintains clearly that Adam was holy before this act of choice, yea, before he exercised "thought or reflection." And he says, that it is according to our natural notions of things that there could be no virtue in this choice, unless it was determined by a virtuous disposition. The common judgment of men is, that moral character belongs to the desire of moral objects. The morality lies in its nature, independently of its origin. Its being from "a kind of instinct," does not destroy its moral character. The desire of holiness is holy, no matter how it rises in the mind. If this be so, a similar tendency of mind and a similar desire, if produced in our mind by the power of the spirit in regeneration, is not "something inserted in the soul" without influence on our character. It constitutes us holy, as truly as Adam was holy at his first creation, though much of sin may yet remain. It is indeed "a mysterious gratuity;" the Scriptures call it *GRACE*; but it is still ours, from its nature, voluntary and active. It is

an inclination of the heart, and, as Dr Bellamy remarks, an "involuntary inclination of the heart is a contradiction in terms." He uses the word voluntary in its larger sense, as Edwards does, and not merely in that which applies to a decision, or selection from among different objects of desire. With him all spontaneous exercises of the mind are voluntary; self-love, the love of children, and all other similar affections. A disposition therefore to these, or any other exercises, existing prior to the exercises, in his view, does not destroy their character as voluntary, nor their morality if they have reference to moral objects; this depends upon their nature, not their origin.

We have already remarked that the opposite system destroys the moral character of the first act (in reference to moral objects) in Adam, and in regeneration. We are ready to admit, that as the desire of a holy object is from its nature holy, so the choice of such an object as holy, is from its nature good. But it is inconceivable that holiness, as such, can be chosen without a previous apprehension of its real excellence and desire for it as such. For the choice is but the determination of the desire. If therefore moral character be denied to the antecedent desire, the choice loses its moral character also. It cannot be confined to the act of choice, for there can in fact be no choice of a holy object as such, but from a desire for it in its true character, and this is a holy desire, and precedes the choice. If self-love be only so far the motive to this choice, that it "prompts to the choice, but not determines it," what, we ask, does determine it? There are but two answers to this question. The one is that the will determines itself, *i. e.* the choice is made in indifference, and has clearly no moral character; or it is determined by a desire of the object as such, (not mere desire of happiness, for that only prompts to the choice, *not determines it*) and then the whole theory is relinquished, for here is the desire of a holy object, not merely as a means of happiness, but for the object as holy, which must needs be a holy desire, and being antecedent to the choice, would be, according to the theory, anterior to the commencement of holiness.

The truth is, that this whole system is a forced and unnatural union, between Arminian philosophy and Calvinistic facts. A union which can neither be peaceful nor lasting. Nor is this the first time that it has been attempted. The

favourite principle of the opposers of the doctrines, which are now called Calvinistic, in all ages, has been, that moral character can only belong to acts of choice; and of course, that no such thing as original righteousness or original sin is possible or conceivable; that any other influence in regeneration, than that of moral suasion, by which one man is led to make a good choice, which another man, under the same influence, might refuse to make, is inconsistent with moral agency; that the doctrines of election and perseverance of the saints, presupposing that of efficacious grace, must necessarily be untrue. The first departures from these doctrines have commenced by adopting the main principle, and endeavouring to reconcile it, as far as possible, with the facts involved in the doctrines themselves; viz. that all men do sin, with absolute certainty, the moment they become moral agents; that the influence of the Spirit is infallibly efficacious: and that all whom God has chosen certainly believe and attain eternal life. But less than a generation has commonly been sufficient to break the connexion, and leave the philosophical principle undisputed master of the field.

That this principle is inconsistent with the doctrine of original righteousness is formally admitted. That it involves the denial of original sin, as this doctrine has been commonly held among Calvinists, is equally clear. According to the prevalent doctrine on this subject, original sin consists, first, in the imputation of Adam's sin: this, it seems, has been long exploded: secondly, in the want of original righteousness, this is gone too, for there never was any such thing; and thirdly, in the corruption of nature, that is, a tendency to do what God has prohibited, existing prior to all acts of choice, and independently of them, and now this is gone. There is no such tendency to sin, as can be considered a moral disposition.

Although this article has already swollen far beyond our expectations, we cannot pass this subject without a single remark on the charge of physical depravity. The futility and unfairness of the same charge, as it regards the subject of regeneration, we have endeavoured to expose above. As this rests on precisely the same grounds, it must stand or fall with the other. If there may be moral principles prior to moral acts, (as we think must be assumed, in the case of Adam, or make the commencement of holiness impossible,)

then there is not a shadow of ground for this charge. Nor is it the Calvinistic doctrine, that there is a specific propensity to sin, (analogous to the holy disposition implanted in the heart of Adam), connatural with the soul of man. None such need be assumed, and none such is believed to exist. The mere absence of a native tendency to God leaves the soul in moral confusion and ruin. There is no positive infusion of wickedness. The essential attributes and constitutional propensities are there, and nothing more. But they are there without a principle of moral order and subordination. There is no presiding spirit to turn them to the service of God. The result of this absence is all manner of evil, and a tendency to all this evil lies in this very state of the soul, and exists prior to any of its moral acts. Does the withholding this predisposition to holiness, from a being to whom all the essential attributes of his nature are left unimpaired, make God the author of sin? then must he be accused of being the author of all sin that results from the abandonment of the reprobate, and of all that by the utmost exertion of his power he could prevent. Nor is it more difficult to reconcile this fact (that God should withhold from the fallen race of man those communications which resulted in the innate tendency to holiness, which filled the soul of Adam) with the divine justice and goodness, than it is the admitted fact that he has brought, and is still bringing, the countless millions of the human family into existence under circumstances so unfavourable, that all, without exception, incur the penalty of eternal death at the first moment of moral agency. And that moment arriving too at the first dawn of intellect, and when the first faint flushes of moral feeling rise in the soul. If this be no penalty, we know not what is. "To be placed under a law," says Coleridge, (*Aids to Reflection*, p. 168), "the difficulty of obeying, and the consequences of not obeying which, are both infinite, and to have momentarily to struggle with this difficulty, and to live in momentarily hazard of these consequences—if this be no punishment!—words have no correspondence with thoughts, and thoughts are but shadows of each other, shadows that own no substance for their anti-type. Of such an outrage on common sense Taylor (Bishop Jeremy) was incapable. He himself calls it a penalty; he admits that in effect it is a punishment." It is a penalty too, according to this theory, without transgression; a punishment without a crime. We

cannot see, therefore, that any thing is gained by the new theory over the old doctrine, which represents our race as having enjoyed a full and fair and favourable probation in their first parent, and as being regarded and treated as an apostate race on account of his rebellion: so that the withholding those divine communications which resulted in the first man, in the moral image of his maker, is a penal evil, from which, it is true, utter ruin results, but it is the ruin, not of innocent, but of fallen human beings. This doctrine involves no mysterious confusion of the identity of the race with that of Adam, and no transfer of moral character from him to us. His act was personally his own and only his; it is ours only on the representative principle, which is recognised not only by Dr Hopkins and his followers distinctly, but by Arminians and Pelagians\*, and is so clearly taught by the fact, that the race fell when Adam fell, that it is admitted in reality even by those who formally deny it.

But to return to our subject. This theory not only overthrows the doctrines which we have just mentioned, but it throws the Spirit's influences almost entirely out of view. We are not speaking of the opinions of its advocates, but of the tendency of the theory. According to their views, regeneration consists in the choice of God as the supreme portion of the soul. This requires that the soul should view him as supremely desirable. This the sinner is, not only naturally, but morally, able to do; for his corruption does not blind him to the excellence of holiness, or its adaptedness to promote his happiness. To secure this happiness is the only impulse or motive necessary to make this choice, and he is urged to make it, assured that if he will summon all his powers to the effort, the result, by the grace of God, may follow. We think the grace of God acts a part scarcely more conspicuous in all this scheme, than it does in the enumeration of the titles of an European monarch. There is no blindness to the excellence of the object of choice to be removed, no holy motive is necessary for the grand decision; all that is required is a practical conviction that it will be for the sinner's interests. Firmly as these brethren may believe in the necessity of the Spirit's interference, it is evident that necessity is left out of view almost entirely in

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\* See Whitby on Romans, v. 12.

their theory. Accordingly, when they come to describe the process of this great change, the sinner is the only agent brought to view; he is to consider, ponder and decide, for all which he absolutely needs no assistance, though it may be graciously afforded. This mode of representation stands in strong contrast with the language of Scripture in those passages in which we are said "to be born of the Spirit," "to be created anew in Christ Jesus," to experience the workings "of the exceeding greatness of the power of God," and many others of a similar character.

As to the point which Dr Cox thinks so "intrinsically absurd," and about which he says so much, whether man is passive in regeneration, it will be seen that, for its own sake, it does not merit a moment's discussion. It depends entirely on the previous question. If regeneration be that act of the soul by which it chooses God for its portion, there is an end of all debate on the subject. For no one will maintain that the soul is passive in acting. But if there be any change in the moral state of the soul, prior to its turning unto God, then it is proper to say, that the soul is passive as to that particular point. That is, that the Holy Spirit is the author, and the soul the subject of the change. For all that is meant by the soul's being passive, is, that it is not the agent of the change in question. Its immediate and delightful turning unto God is its own act, the state of mind which leads to this act is produced directly by the Spirit of God. The whole question is, whether any such anterior change is necessary. Whether a soul polluted and degraded by sin, or in Scripture language, carnal, needs any change in its moral taste before it can behold the loveliness of the divine character. For that this view must precede the exercise of affection, we presume will not be denied. If this point be decided, the propriety of using the word passive to denote that the soul is the subject and not the agent of the change in question, need not give us much trouble. Sure it is that this change is in Scripture always referred to the Holy Spirit. It is the soul that repents, believes, hopes and fears, but it is the Holy Spirit that regenerates. He is the author of our faith and repentance by inducing us to act, but no man regenerates himself. The soul, although essentially active, is still capable of being acted upon. It receives impressions from sensible objects, from other spirits and from the Holy Ghost. In every sensation, there is an impression made by

some external object, and the immediate knowledge which the mind takes of the impression. As to the first point, it is passive, or the subject; as to the second, it is active, or the agent. These two are indeed inseparably connected, and so are regeneration and conversion. It is even allowable to say that the mind is passive considered as the recipient of any impression, no matter how communicated. Coleridge says, "IN ATTENTION, we keep the mind *passive*: in THOUGHT, we rouse it into activity. In the former, we submit to an impression, we keep the mind steady in order to receive the stamp." P. 252. Whether this is "technically wretched, philosophically wrong, and theologically false," or not, we do not pretend to say. All that we say is, that it is perfectly intelligible and perfectly according to established usage, to speak of the mind as passive, when considered as the subject of an impression. And if the Holy Spirit does make such an impression on the mind, or exert such an influence as induces it immediately to turn to God, then it is correct to say that it is passive in regeneration, though active in conversion. However, this is a very subordinate point; the main question is, whether there is not a holy "relish," taste, or principle produced in the soul prior, in the order of nature, to any holy act of the soul itself. If Dr Cox can show this to be "intrinsically absurd," we shall give up the question of "passivity," without a moment's demur. To relinquish the other point, however, will cost us a painful struggle. It will be the giving up the main point in debate between the friends and opposers of the doctrines of grace from Augustine to the present day. It will be the renunciation, not only of a favourite principle of old Calvinists, but of one of the fundamental principles of the theology of Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, and, as we believe, of the great body of the New England clergy. It will be the renunciation of what Calvinists, old and new, have believed to be the Scriptural doctrine of original righteousness, original sin and efficacious grace. It will be the rejection of that whole system of mingled sovereignty and love which has been the foundation, for ages, of so many hopes and of so much blessedness to the people of God. And all for what? Because it has been discovered, that what is not an act is an entity; that to suppose the existence of moral disposition prior to moral action, is making morality a substance. As we are incapable of seeing the truth of these axioms, and

believe their assumption to be encumbered with all the difficulties above referred to, we are not disposed to renounce, on their behalf, doctrines which have for ages been held dear by the best portion of the Christian church.

Dr Cox demands what has been the moral history of these doctrines? It would require more time and space than we can now command fully to answer this question. Not to enter on questionable ground, however, we would refer him for an answer to the history of the reformation. These doctrines were held sacred by all those men who were God's great instruments in that blessed work, and are incorporated in the confessions of all the reformed churches. We would point him to the history of the English Puritans and Non-conformists; to the Puritans of New England, from the time of their landing down to a late period in their history, and to the present opinions of the great body of their descendants. We would refer him to any age or any church, peculiarly distinguished for genuine piety. For there is scarcely one of the doctrines which he has empaled in his introduction, (with the exception of the mere extent of the atonement, a point of very subordinate importance to that of its nature), which does not enter in the faith of the great body of evangelical Christians. We have no doubt that Dr Cox believes these doctrines. What we lament is, that he should have "caricatured" the manner in which the vast majority of those who hold them have been accustomed to represent them, and that he should even seem to advocate a principle which we fear is subversive of them all.

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#### REVIEW.

*Lectures on the Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, addressed to Youth.*  
By Ashbel Green, D.D. Philadelphia. A. Finley, and Towar and Hogan. One Volume.

With pleasure we hail the appearance of these Lectures on the Shorter Catechism, and we are gratified to see them