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ARTICLE I.

SIN, AS RELATED TO HUMAN NATURE AND TO THE  
DIVINE PURPOSE.

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SEMINARY.

THERE is, perhaps, no one topic in the whole province of theological investigation that presents to the philosophic and thoughtful inquirer more, or more formidable, problems than the doctrine of sin. It meets him in every direction, and always with a difficulty. Whether he turn his thoughts to the divine or human side of theology, Godward or manward, in either case he comes directly upon this strange and unaccountable phenomenon. It stands like some fearful spectre in his path, barring further progress; and he may well exclaim, with Milton's angel:

“ Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,  
That darest oppose my way ? ”

There are two aspects in which this doctrine is of special moment to the theological inquirer: one is, the relation which it sustains to *the nature of man*; the other, its relation to *the divine will and purpose*. It is the object of the following pages, not to offer new opinions, or advance a new

causes themselves to yield unwonted supplies. The special guidance and guardianship of Israel by God throughout is the burden of the story.

On the whole there is nothing of which this book so much reminds us as the persistent efforts of a wily advocate to mislead a jury by impudent assertion and deliberate misconstruction of the testimony. And there is no process before which it would so shrink into nothing as the searching examination of a legal mind fully informed on those subjects.

Part II is devoted to a consideration of the age and authorship of the Pentateuch. It deals more with questions of scholarship and criticism, and is much less popular in its cast. As a discussion of the subject from that point of view, it bears no comparison with those of German scholars, or with that of Dr. Davidson in his Introduction (1862). As the whole subject is undergoing a discussion in this periodical; and the objections will be probably met more at large than can be done in this place, we refrain from further comment.

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## ARTICLE VII.

### THE TERCENTENARY JUBILEE OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

[This Article was prepared by Dr. Philip Schaff, and forms a fit appendix to Dr. Gerhart's Article, published in our January number, on the German Reformed Church].

THE Heidelberg Catechism is the most generally received doctrinal symbol of the Reformed Confession, as distinct from the Roman Catholic, and the Lutheran. It is more particularly the creed of the German Reformed and Dutch Reformed churches in Europe and in this country. It was prepared at the request of Frederic III., justly surnamed the Pious, Elector of the Palatinate, Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, the former a pupil and intimate friend of Melancthon, the latter a pupil of Calvin. After being examined and approved by a synod of the Palatinate convened for that purpose at Heidelberg in December 1562, it was first published January 19, 1563, at Heidelberg, the seat of the oldest German University, and at that time the capital of the Palatinate on the Rhine. Hence it is called generally the Heidelberg Catechism, after the city of its birth, or also the Palatinate Catechism, from the electorate of that name for which it was originally intended. It soon found extraordinary favor, and threw all the older Reformed Catechisms, even that of the great Calvin, into the shade. It was introduced as a guide of catechetical instruction and as a confession of faith into the various Reformed churches of Germany, into several Swiss cantons, into Hol-

land, Hungary, and Poland. It was also approved by the Reformed church of Poland, and published among its doctrinal standards. It was translated into Latin, ancient and modern Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, all the leading languages of Europe, and several dialects of Asia. Innumerable commentaries and sermons were written on it, especially in Holland. For in several countries it was made the basis of catechetical discourses on Sunday afternoon. It is supposed that the Heidelberg Catechism was more frequently printed, translated, assailed, defended, analyzed, explained, and written about than any other catechism of the Christian religion.

The theology of the Heidelberg Catechism grew out of the combined influences of Zuinglianism, Calvinism, and Melancthonian Lutheranism, which met in the Palatinate, and especially in the University of Heidelberg, about the middle of the sixteenth century. It represents the mildest form of Calvinism modified by the influence of the gentle and peaceful Melancthon, who was himself a native of the Palatinate, who controlled the Reformation in that country, and who in his latter years decidedly leaned towards the Reformed Confession, especially in regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The catechism occupies thus an intermediate and conciliatory position between the Lutheran Confession in Germany and the strict Calvinistic churches of France, Holland, England, and Scotland, and extends the hand of fellowship to both. Hence it was acceptable to the Melancthonians, or Philippists, and Crypto-Calvinists, as they were called in Germany, and was endorsed at the same time in the strongest terms by the strictly Calvinistic Synod of Dort.

One of the chief excellences of the Heidelberg Catechism is its devotional character. It is not simply the product of profound theological study, but also of fervent prayer and meditation. It is full of unction, and baptized by the fire of the Holy Ghost. It speaks the language of Christian experience, and addresses itself to the heart as well as the mind and memory of the pupil. It regards the catechumen not as an outsider, but as standing already in covenant relation with God by virtue of his baptism and connection with Christian parents, and thus bound to serve him, and to grow up more and more in the nurture of the Lord. By its practical character, its theological depth, and spiritual richness it has become a book of devotion to the adult as well as a guide in the instruction of Christian youth.

The first question which has always been admired as a real gem in catechetical literature, is characteristic of the whole spirit and tone of the work. It contains the theme, and answers the first and last question of man's only comfort in life and in death, making it consist in his vital union with the Saviour for time and eternity. "What is thine only comfort in life and in death? That I am not my own, but both in body and soul, in life and in death, belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who by his precious blood fully satisfied for all my sins and delivered me from the power of the devil, and so preserves me that without the will of my Heavenly Father not so much as a hair can fall from my head; yea all things must work to-

gether for my salvation. Wherefore by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of everlasting life, and makes me ready and willing henceforth to live unto him." The second question contains the division, stating, that in order to enjoy this comfort, man must know three things: first his own sin and misery in a state of nature, secondly the redemption of Christ, and thirdly his debt of gratitude to God. This threefold order is taken from the Epistle to the Romans, where Paul first treats of man's sin and need of redemption (i. - iii. 20), then of the Christian redemption and justification by faith (iii. 21 - xii.), and last of man's gratitude for so great a salvation (xii. to the close). It corresponds also to the practical experience of the Christian who passes from the state of sin and misery to the state of redeeming grace, and thereby is enabled to serve God and to do his holy will. In the second part the catechism gives a most skilful popular exposition of the Apostles' Creed, and the third part an equally able and impressive exposition of the ten commandments and the Lord's prayer. The whole contains one hundred and twenty-nine questions and answers, divided into fifty-two Sundays with reference to the old Reformed custom of preaching catechetical sermons. Each question is amply fortified by scripture proofs, which upon the whole are very judiciously selected, although several might be replaced by more convincing passages.

This catechism was transplanted to America by the Dutch Reformed church after its settlement on the banks of the Hudson, 1609, or rather 1618, when the first congregation was organized on Manhattan Island, and by the German Reformed church since the beginning of the eighteenth century. The German Reformed church owns no other symbolical book besides the Heidelberg catechism, and thus reserves to itself considerable freedom for theological progress. The Dutch Reformed church recognizes in addition the articles of the Synod of Dort, and is thus like the Old school Presbyterian church, more decidedly committed to the strict Calvinistic scheme of theology on the subject of a double predestination, original sin, and the loss of free will by the fall.

It was in honor of this venerable Catechism, which is now three hundred years old, and thus has outlived the time generally allowed by Roman Catholic controversialists to the duration of heresy, that the synod of the German Reformed church in the United States held a memorial convention in the city of Philadelphia from the 17th to the 23d of January last. This jubilee, the first of the kind held in the churches of this country, has a more than denominational significance, and claims the respectful attention of all the branches of the old reformed family. It is important that the original reformed family feeling which has given way of late to sectional and sectarian names and interests, should be revived again. Calvin, the strongest, and Melancthon, the gentlest, of the Reformers, agree, among other things, in their fervent desire and prayers for more unity and harmony among the evangelical churches and Christians of their age. Let us remember their prayer, and labor for the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and thus

counteract the centrifugal tendency towards excessive sectionalism and individualism so strong in our age and country. One of the most effectual means to this end is to go back to primitive foundations and the common starting-point of the various evangelical denominations, and a careful study of their genius and history, by which they will learn to know and appreciate each other more and more.

The object of the tercentenary celebration of the formation and publication of the Heidelberg catechism was to revive the ever memorable history of the Reformation under its reformed aspect, yet with perfect respect for the Lutheran section; to connect the church of the present with the church of the past, and to invigorate and urge it to renewed energy, and by all the impulses to be derived from the heroic period and the pentecostal days of Protestantism. It is also contemplated to make this movement practically useful during the remainder of the present year by way of general contributions for the more complete endowment of the literary and theological institutions and the increase of the missionary activity of the German Reformed church.

It was a special favor of Providence that this branch of the old Reformed communion was permitted to celebrate this festival of peace in spite of the clamor and distraction of civil war. The convention, though held in the midst of winter, was very largely attended from all parts of the German Reformed church, and by distinguished ministers of the leading evangelical denominations, especially Presbyterians and Lutherans. The Presbyterian Historical Society sent official greetings from Westminster to Heidelberg, which were properly responded to by Dr. Nevin, the venerable President of the convention. It lasted a whole week. Several sessions were held simultaneously in English and in German at two churches, without however breaking the unity of the convention. The spirit which prevailed was free from denominational and sectarian bigotry, and truly Melancthonian, catholic, and Christian. Nothing occurred to mar the harmony and good feeling, and all parted with a deep sense of gratitude to God for the rich spiritual feast they were permitted to enjoy.

The principal and most interesting part of the convention consisted in the reading and discussion of about twenty essays, which were especially prepared for the occasion by distinguished divines of the German Reformed church in Europe and in this country. This was the first time in history that German professors addressed an American audience, and they did it with great credit to themselves, and to the full satisfaction of the hearers. Drs. Ullmann, Hundeshagen, Ebrard, and Herzog treated their subject with learning, talent, tact, and excellent spirit. Their productions were read both in the German original and in an English translation prepared from the manuscript. These various essays brought out successively the leading events and characters of the Reformation — this most stirring and important period of the church history next to that of the Apostles. In the language of the closing address of the convention, "Luther, the Elijah of

Protestantism, the humble monk who from his quiet study at Wittenberg shook the world by the simple power of faith; Melancthon, the meek and gentle, the mild and lovely, friend both of Luther and Calvin, whose last care and prayer was for the unity of the evangelical churches; Zuingli the honest and hardy son of the Swiss mountains, those symbols of power and freedom, whose chief object was to insert the pure Christ from the fountain of the scriptures into the hearts of men; Calvin, the exile from the land of his birth for his faith, the great theologian, legislator and disciplinarian, whose master mind and holy zeal for the glory of sovereign free grace still controls the most earnest and active portions of Protestant Christendom; Frederick III., confessedly the most pious and one of the wisest and best of all princes of that period; Ursinus, who expressed his inmost life in the inimitable first question of his and our catechism, and who declared that he would not take ten thousand worlds for his conviction that he belonged to Christ for time and for eternity; Olevianus who sealed his faith by a pious death, his last word being a triumphant *certissimus* to the question whether he was still assured of his salvation: these and other heroes of faith, together with the stirring thoughts and facts of that most eventful age arose from the grave of history, and spoke burning words of wisdom and counsel to this convention and the church it represents. But the Reformation itself strikes its roots in the Middle Ages, and Mediæval Christianity rests on the ancient Christianity, and the fathers echo the voice of the apostles, and the apostles point us to Christ, the great Captain of our salvation and the ever-living head of the church, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all."

All these essays together with the opening sermons, free addresses, and a history of the Tercentenary Movement will shortly appear in an English and German Memorial Volume, also a triglott edition of the Heidelberg Catechism in German, Latin, and a new English version. Free copies of these works will be sent by order of the Convention to the leading theological seminaries of the country. We can here only give in conclusion a list of the subjects of the Essays with their respective authors:

- I. The Swiss Reformers. By Prof. Dr. Herzog, of Erlangen, Germany.
- II. Melancthon and the Melancthonian Tendency. By Dr. Ebrard, of Erlangen, Germany.
- III. The City and University of Heidelberg at the Time of the Reformation. By Prof. Dr. Hundeshagen, of Heidelberg.
- IV. The Heidelberg Catechism and its Fortunes in Germany, especially in the Palatinate. By Prelate Dr. Ullmann, of Carlsruh, Germany.
- V. The Heidelberg Catechism in Scotland. By Dr. Schotel, of Leyden, Holland.
- VI. Critical Introduction to the proposed Tercentenary Triglott edition of the Heidelberg Catechism. By Dr. S. N. Nevin, of Lancaster, Pa.
- VII. The Elector Frederick III., or the Pious, of the Palatinate. By Dr. B. S. Schneck, of Chambersburg, Pa.
- VIII. Ursinus and Olevianus. By Prof. Thomas C. Porter, Lancaster, Pa.

IX. The Confessional Relations of the Heidelberg Catechism. By Dr. E. V. Gerhart, Lancaster, Pa.

X. The Theological System of the Heidelberg Catechism. By Dr. M. Kieffer, Tiffin, Ohio.

XI. The Genius of the Reformed Church as compared with the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran Confession. By Prof. T. Appel, Lancaster, Pa.

XII. The Organism of the Heidelberg Catechism. By Rev. Thomas Appel, Greencastle, Pa.

XIII. The Theoretical and Practical Mission of the German Reformed Church in America. By Dr. Philip Schaff, Andover, Mass.

XIV. The Theological Seminary at Mercersburg. By Dr. B. C. Wolff, Mercersburg, Pa.

XV. The Necessity and Use of Creeds. By Rev. J. B. Russell, Pittsburg, Pa.

XVI. The Heidelberg Catechism in the Dutch Reformed Church of America. By Dr. De Witt, New York.

XVII. The Fortunes of the Heidelberg Catechism in the German Reformed Church in America. By Dr. Bomberger, Philadelphia.

XVIII. The Educational System of Religion. By Rev. D. Gaus, Harrisburg, Pa.

XIX. Creed and Cultus. By Dr. H. Harbaugh, Lebanon, Pa.

XX. Catechetics and Catechetical Instruction. By Rev. B. Bausman, Chambersburg, Pa.

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## ARTICLE VIII.

### LATEST GERMAN THEOLOGICAL WORKS.

BY PROF. W. F. WARREN, OF BREMEN.

(1.) *Die Psalmen Uebersetzt und Ausgelegt*, von Dr. Ferdinand Hitzig, Professor der Theologie in Heidelberg. (Vol. I. 8vo. pp. xxxi and 312. Price, 2 Thaler). This is the title of a new commentary upon the Psalms, the first volume of which, reaching to the 55th, has just been issued. A former work of Dr. Hitzig's (*Die Psalmen, Historischer und kritischer Commentar nebst Uebersetzung, 2 Bde.*) appeared in 1885-36, and created no small sensation by the boldness of its "positive" criticism. De Wette having endeavored in his Commentary (1811) to throw doubt and suspicion upon most of the results of contemporary and former biblical scholars without substituting anything reliable in their place, Hitzig seems to have felt himself called upon to complement his predecessor's negative and destructive work by setting forth the positive results to which the new and "only truly scientific" principles of biblical criticism must necessarily lead. Accordingly he set himself to the determination of the real authorship, age, etc., of each Psalm from internal, philological, and rhetorical characteristics.