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I.

SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE FEDERAL THEORY OF IMMEDIATE IMPUTATION.

WE will notice the most radical objection first. A distinguished theologian, who teaches immediate imputation, and who would be classed as a Calvinist, objects to the federal theory on the ground that "it is extra-scriptural, there being no mention of such a covenant with Adam in the account of man's trial." What he thinks of the covenant of grace may be gathered from the fact that he makes election logically subsequent, in God's decree, to the purpose to redeem. "The true order of the decrees," he holds, "is therefore as follows: 1, The decree to create; 2, the decree to permit the fall; 3, the decree to provide a salvation in Christ sufficient for the needs of all; 4, the decree to secure the actual acceptance of this salvation on the part of some—or, in other words, the decree of election." Such an order of the decrees is obviously inconsistent with a federal relation on the part of the Redeemer to any particular class of fallen men. It implies that his work had equal reference to all. Election is simply an expedient to save the scheme from ignominious failure. We understand this author to make a square issue. The natural relation is the only one we sustain to Adam: our union with Christ begins when we exercise saving faith. The theory of the covenant being extra-scriptural, he does not employ the terms which belong to it. To use Bishop Butler's distinction, he objects to the evidence rather than to the contents of revelation. We agree with him entirely that the question is one of fact. If the doctrine of the covenants is not a matter of divine revelation, then any

Suppose the State should execute a criminal unconscious of his offence, mentally incapable of appreciating the reasons for his execution, and in a state of unconsciousness at the time of his hanging? If a delay would bring him to his senses, would not justice require a stay of execution?

The figure is inadequate, but it illustrates how justice would defeat itself by a premature infliction of penalty.

The infant has no consciousness of original sin—there is no sense of evil in his conscience. He is a sensitive creature, and can feel pain, but he cannot appreciate *penalty*. To him, hell would be pain, but his incapacity of understanding and appreciating the reasons for hell would prevent him from looking upon it, or feeling it, as *penalty*. But God sends no creature to hell just to inflict suffering, but that he may appreciate penalty—that he may experience the consequences of transgression.

An infant in hell would be mentally incompetent of asking the question, Why am I here? If he should ask the question, he would be mentally incapable of answering it, or of understanding the answer were it explained to him. His endless sufferings would be an endless enigma.

What course, then, shall providence pursue with that infant whom grace has passed by? Preserve his life until he passes out of infancy into adulthood, when he will become conscious of his sin and guilt, and will then be able to say "Amen" to the judgment which consigns him to death.

This is all inference, very fallible and meagrely expressed, but, it strikes us, as a safer explanation, and one more consistent with Calvinistic premises, than that offered by Dr. Stagg, who seeks to make some sort of universal application of the atonement of Christ to the redemption of "the infant state."

Still, it would be a thousand pities to have to support an amendment to the Confession of Faith with his, or ours, or anybody else's, mere theologizing.

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VAUGHAN'S "SERMONS."

SERMONS. *By Rev. C. R. Vaughan, D. D., of the Synod of Virginia.* Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1902. Cloth. Pp. 363. \$1.25, net.

Dr. Vaughan is a stalwart champion of Calvinistic orthodoxy. He always sees clearly, feels truly, fights intelligently, and triumphs splendidly. He perceives issues in their trueness and gravity, and grapples in earnest and awful debate with premises. It is a joy to see him in the arena. You feel his strength, you see his skill, you foreknow his victory. Truth never suffers dishonor at his hands. The hosts of Israel never lament over his championship.

The sermons before us are classified as "apologetic, doctrinal, and miscellaneous." They are not pitiful sermonets, scissored anecdotes, recitations of trifling experiences, sensational pyrotechnics, sophomoric phrases and figures. The preacher is incapable of trifling. These sermons are discussions. They lay down grave propositions; they draw clarifying distinctions; they deal in rational arguments, and make appeals to the sober and sane hearts of hearers. They compel thought, force instruction, expose fallacies,

and send the auditor from the sanctuary convinced in understanding, and satisfied that the foundations of his faith are adamantine.

It is a great and abounding joy to hail this volume, to praise and commend it in strong language.

We have in all twenty-two sermons—seven on the Scriptures, six on sin, four on salvation, and five on the supernatural.

The seven on the Scriptures discuss important phases of the rule of faith. In the first he argues the right and duty of "man as such, or as a lost sinner," to search the Scriptures. The second treats of the "indelible responsibility" of man in the discharge of this right and duty. The third gives an interesting and edifying explanation of the failure of the students of Scripture to come to a uniform belief in their interpretation, dealing most effectively with the competing papal theory and claim.

The fourth sermon treats of the relation of the minister to the Word, and endeavors to show both what he is to preach and how he is to preach. The fifth enumerates the qualifications of a public teacher of religion, emphasizing knowledge, spirituality, candor, aptness, meekness, discrimination, balance and proportion. The sixth is upon the manner of using, and the seventh upon the manner of hearing the Scriptures.

In these seven discourses the competing premises of the Romanists and rationalists are fairly stated, skillfully analyzed, and overwhelmingly refuted. In some places the polemics are splendid, and the replies of the preacher are as neat as complete.

Following the sermons on the Scriptures are five on sin, its nature, effects, guilt and penalties. In its essence and formal nature, sin is moral evil—wrong. Its effects are guilt, pollution, an evil conscience, misery, pledge of more evil, displeasure of God, condemnation, loss of heaven, all ending in hell. The component elements in the guilt of sin are two—desert of suffering, and liability of suffering. In the two sermons on the penalties of sin, he argues for endless punishment, first from nature and then from the Scriptures. The last is particularly strong and convincing.

We next have four sermons in soteriology. They begin with the necessity of repentance, and give it a threefold grounding: (1) It is morally necessary; every wrong-doer is in conscience and honor bound to repent, whether he is benefited by it or not. (2) It is legally necessary, for the obligations and precepts of the law abide, whatever the transgression; evil-doing does not abolish the jurisdiction of law, nor put an end to duty. (3) It is religiously necessary; the honor of God, when violated, fairly requires repentance at the sinner's hands.

The next sermon takes up the subject of justification, explains the meaning of the term and doctrine, then expounds the purpose of justification, and concludes with showing how the sinner can be justified. According to Dr. Vaughan, the object of justification is to "lead up to adoption in the family of God." We do not quite see it in this light. Adoption is a grace coördinate with justification, and not the fruitage or culmination of justification. Adoption gives us right and title in the house and family of God; justification gives us right and title in the kingdom of God. It is quite conceivable that a servant might be justified as a citizen of the divine common-

wealth, without ever being translated into God's family. The two relations—the servile and the filial—are compatible, but entirely distinct. Grace provides for both relations—justification for one, and adoption for the other.

The next sermon is a particularly strong one on justification by works. The publishers have made the blunder, however, of heading every page of this sermon with the caption, "Justification by Faith." That is not the title, nor the subject treated in the sermon.

We are particularly charmed with the discourse on "Substitution and Representation," in which a distinction is drawn between "imperfect imputation," which involves children in the sins of their parents, and "perfect imputation," which is the principle of federal representation. That the parental headship and procreative idea does not rule the transmission of sin and righteousness is clear, "for it is evident that not only are children implicated in the sins of their fathers, but fathers are often implicated in the sins of their children; and that the wave of distress is not confined to the immediate circle of the criminal's household, but spreads over collateral connections to a greater or less degree." The law of nature works both forwards and backwards; not only from the father to the son, but from the son to the father; while the law of the covenant operates persistently in one direction only—from the federal head to the legal posterity. There is no resisting such argumentation for the federal as distinguished from the propagative theory of sin.

The sermon on the "Function of Faith in Justification" abounds in fine and clarifying distinctions. As a specimen: "The peculiar reason why faith is necessary, and no other grace is available, is found in its own nature as adjusted to the work of receiving things. It is not because of its superior moral value to other graces of the Spirit, for Paul makes it equal in this respect to hope, but inferior to charity. It is exclusively related to justification, because it is a natural gesture of acceptance. The hand is the bodily organ for receiving things; it is naturally adapted for that purpose."

There are three sermons on the Miracle, dealing respectively with their possibility, their capability of proof, and finally the actual proof of biblical miracles. To prove the genuineness of Scripture miracles the author lays down and applies thirteen tests: (1) "Divine miracle is inseparably correlated with a revelation of God." (2) "True miracle is never done in favor of a religion already established." (3) It must consist with the "dignity of Almighty God." (4) It must be "clearly cognizable by the human senses." (5) It must be "performed openly, in public, in the presence of witnesses of discriminating character." (6) "Public tests must be applied." (7) It must be generally recognized "by the universal public." (8) "Public and organized arrangements" must be made to permanently preserve miraculous events. (9) There must be "prophetic announcement beforehand." (10) It must stand the test of "variety and wealth of action." (11) It must occur "infrequently." (12) "The character and work of the official witnesses" must support its pretensions. (13) It must command "the testimony and assent of the enemies of the Christian system." All these points are magnificently developed, and prove that no pseudo-miracle is like to pass the challenge of this discriminating judge. What a presumption in favor of Scripture miracles that they can command the faith of one so searching and cautious!

The last two sermons are on the relation of the natural and supernatural. Space forbids any attempt to exhibit their contents. It may be said of these, as of them all, they are clear, massive, splendid discussions of some of the greatest themes which stand in waiting at the portals of human thought.

Would that a multitude of preachers would take this volume, and learn from it that strength which these weak times so perishingly need!

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ROBBINS' "CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC."

A CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC. *By Wilford L. Robbins, D. D., Dean of the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany, U. S. A.* 12mo, pp. 194. Longmans, Green & Co., 39 Paternoster Row, London; New York and Bombay. 1902.

This neat little volume is one of a series of "Handbooks for the Clergy," edited by Arthur N. Robinson, Vicar of Allhallows, Barking by the Tower (London, England). This series is evidently prepared mainly for the clergy of the episcopal branch of the church, but it will be of service to the ministers of other branches of the church also.

The series, of which this volume is one, consists of ten numbers. Six of these are already published, and four are in course of preparation. Their titles will show their general nature and scope: "The Personal Life of the Clergy," "Patristic Study," "The Ministry of Conversion," "Foreign Missions," "The Study of the Gospels," "A Christian Apologetic," "Pastoral Visitation," "The Study of Church History," "Authority and the Principle of Obedience," "Science and Religion," "Lay Work." The authors are all men in the Episcopal Church in England, and their expositions are suited chiefly to the conditions of that branch of the church in the old land. It will be seen also that the subjects discussed are mainly practical in their nature.

The little volume before us is rightly termed, "A Christian Apologetic," for it makes no claim to be a systematic treatise on apologetics, as this term is now understood. It is simply one line of the vindication of the reasonableness of the contents of the Christian faith. It is by no means a defence and vindication of Christianity at all points. Yet it has its distinct value.

The titles of its chapters will show its aim and limits: "Introductory," "Definition of Aim," "Apologetics in the Light of Modern Thought," "Jesus Christ, and the Moral Ideal," "The Divine Claim of Christ," "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ," "The Trustworthiness of the Christian Records," "The Witness of Prophecy," "The Demonstration of the Spirit."

In the introduction allusion is made to the dislike many people have of this study, and some reasons are stated for this temper among many good people. Yet our author claims a place and value for this branch of religious discussion.

In defining his aim the author simply assumes the results of the whole theistic discussion, which is the subject matter of fundamental apologetics; and he announces that he proposes to deal with Jesus Christ, and to make good his historical reality, and the divinity of his person and mission among