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FINNEY
VARIOUS SUBJECTS

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No. I.

Sinners bound to change their own hearts.

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ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

Charles
BY REV. C. G. FINNEY,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

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SERMON I.

Sinners bound to change their own hearts.

Ezek. xviii. 31.

MAKE YOU A NEW HEART AND A NEW SPIRIT, FOR WHY WILL YE DIE?

THESE words were addressed to the house of Israel, who from their history and from the verses in connection with the text, were evidently in a state of impenitency; and the requirement to make them a new heart and a new spirit was enforced by the weighty penalty of death. The death mentioned in the text cannot mean natural death; for natural death is common both to those who have, and to those who have not, a new heart. Nor can it mean spiritual death, which is a state of entire sinfulness; for then it should have read, *Why are ye already dead?* The death here spoken of must mean eternal death, or that state of banishment from God and the glory of his power into which the soul shall be cast that dies in its iniquities.

The command here addressed to the Israelites is binding upon every impenitent sinner to whom the gospel shall be addressed. He is required to perform the same duty, upon the same penalty. It becomes, therefore, a matter of infinite importance that we should well understand, and fully and immediately obey, the requirement. The questions that would naturally arise to a reflecting mind on reading this text, are the following:

1. What are we to understand by the requirement to make a new heart and a new spirit?
2. Is it reasonable to require the performance of this duty on pain of eternal death?

3. How is this requirement, that we should make to us a new heart and a new spirit, consistent with the often repeated declarations of the Bible, that a new heart is the gift and work of God?

Does God require of us the performance of this duty, without expecting its fulfilment only, merely to show us our impotency and dependence upon him? Does he require us to make to ourselves a new heart, on pain of eternal death, when at the same time he knows we have no power to obey; and that if ever the work is done, he must himself do the very thing which he requires of us?

In order to answer these questions satisfactorily, I will attempt to show,

I. What is *not* the meaning of this requirement; and

II. What it *is*.

It should here be observed, that although the Bible was not given to teach us mental philosophy, yet we may rest assured that all its declarations are in accordance with the true philosophy of mind. The term *spirit* in the Bible is used in different senses: it sometimes means a spiritual being, or moral agent; in other places it is used in the sense in which we often employ it in conversation. In speaking of the temper of a man, we say he has a good or bad spirit, a lovely or hateful spirit. It is evidently used in this sense in the text. The term *heart* is also employed in various senses: sometimes it appears to be used as synonymous with soul; sometimes it evidently means the will; sometimes the conscience; sometimes it seems to be used in such an extensive sense as to cover all the moral movements of the mind; sometimes it expresses the natural or social affections. The particular sense in which it is to be understood in any place may easily be determined by the connection in which it stands. Our present business is to ascertain its meaning as used in the text; for it is in this sense that we are required to make us a new heart and a new spirit. I begin, therefore, by saying,

1. That it does not mean the fleshy heart, or that bodily organ which is the seat of animal life.

2. That it does not mean a new soul. We have one soul, and do not need another. Nor,

3. Are we required to create any new faculties of body or mind. We now have all the powers of moral agency; we are just as God made us, and do not need any alteration in the substance of soul or body. Nor,

4. Does it mean that we are to bring to pass any *constitutional* change in ourselves. We are not required to add to the constitution of our minds or bodies any new principle or taste. Some persons speak of a change of heart as something miraculous—something in which the sinner is to be entirely passive, and for which he is to wait in the use of means, as he would wait for a surgical operation, or an electric shock. We need nothing added to the con-

stitution of our body or mind; nor is it true in experience, that those who have a new heart have any constitutional alteration of their powers whatever. They are the same identical persons, so far as both body and mind are concerned, that they were before. The alteration lies in the manner in which they are disposed to use, and do actually employ, their moral and physical powers. A constitutional change, either in body or mind, would destroy personal identity. A Christian, or one who has a new heart, would not be the same individual in regard to his powers of moral agency, that he was before—would not be the same agent, and under the same responsibilities.

Again—A constitutional alteration, and the implantation of a new principle in the substance of his soul, or diffusing a new taste which is incorporated with, and becomes an essential part of his being, would destroy all the virtue of his obedience. It would make obedience to God a mere gratification of appetite, in which there would be no more real virtue than in eating when we are hungry, or drinking when we are thirsty.

Again—The constitutional implantation of a principle of holiness in the mind, or the creation of a constitutional taste for holiness, if such a thing were possible, would render the perseverance of the saints physically necessary, falling from grace would be a natural impossibility, and would thus destroy all the virtue of perseverance.

Again—A constitutional change would dispense with the necessity of the Spirit's agency after conversion. A re-creation of his faculties, the implantation of a holy taste in the substance of his mind, would plainly dispense with any other agency on his part in after life, than that of upholding the creature in being, and giving him power to act; when, in obedience to the laws of his renewed nature, or in the gratification of his new appetite, he would obey of course.

But this implantation of a new principle, which dispenses with the necessity of the special influences of the Spirit in after life, is contrary to experience; for those who have a new heart find that his constant agency is as indispensable to their perseverance in holiness as it was to their conversion.

Again—The idea of a constitutional change is inconsistent with backsliding. For it is manifest, if the constitution of the mind were changed, and a taste for holiness and obedience were implanted in the substance of the soul, that to backslide, or to fall from grace, would be naturally as impossible as to alter the constitutional appetites of the body.

Again—A constitutional change is unnecessary. It has been supposed by some, that the motives of the gospel had no tendency to move the mind to obedience to God, unless there is something implanted in the mind which answers to the outward motive, between which and the motives of the gospel there is a moral affinity. In other words, they maintain that as the motives of the gospel are holy, there must be a holy taste or principle implanted in the

substance of the mind, before these motives can act as motives at all; that there must be a taste corresponding to, and of the same nature of the outward motive, or there is nothing in the motive calculated to move the mind. That is, if the motive be holy, the constitutional taste must be holy; if the motive be sinful, the constitutional taste must be sinful. But this is absurd, and contrary to fact. Upon this principle, I would inquire, How could holy Adam sin? Did God or the devil first implant a constitutional sinful taste within him, answering to the outward motive? How could the holy angels sin? Did God also implant a sinful principle or taste in them? or were Adam and "the angels that kept not their first estate," originally created with sinful tastes, answering to those outward motives? Then they were always sinners, and that by creation. Who then is the author of sin, and responsible for all their wickedness? It is true the constitution of the mind must be suited to the nature of the outward influence or motive; and there must be such an adaptation of the mind to the motive, and of the motive to the mind, as is calculated to produce any desired action of the mind. But it is absurd to say, that this constitutional adaptation must be a holy principle, or taste, or craving after obedience to God. All holiness, in God, angels, or men, must be voluntary or it is not holiness. To call any thing that is a part of the mind or body, holy—to speak of a holy substance, unless it be in a figurative sense, is to talk nonsense. Holiness is virtue; it is something that is praiseworthy; it cannot therefore be a part of the created substance of body or mind, but must consist in voluntary obedience to the principles of eternal righteousness. The necessary adaptation of the outward motive to the mind, and of the mind to the motive, lies in the powers of moral agency, which every human being possesses. He has understanding to perceive and weigh; he has conscience to decide upon the nature of moral opposites; he has the power and liberty of choice. Now to this moral agent, possessing these faculties, the motives of the gospel are addressed; and there is plainly a natural tendency in these weighty considerations to influence him to obey his Maker.

But I come now to show what we are to understand by the command of the text. The Bible often speaks of the heart, as a fountain, from which flow the moral affections and actions of the soul, as in Matt. xv. 19, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." The term *heart*, as applied to mind, is figurative, and recognizes an analogy between the heart of the body, and the heart of the soul. The fleshly organ of the body called the *heart*, is the seat and fountain of animal life, and by its constant action, diffuses life through the animal system. *The spiritual heart is the fountain of spiritual life, is that deep seated but voluntary preference of the mind, which lies back of all its other voluntary affections and emotions, and from which they take their character.* In this sense I understand the term heart to be used in the text. It is evidently something over which we have control; something voluntary; something for which we are to blame, and which we are bound to alter. Now if the requirement is, that we are to make some constitutional change in the substance of the body

or mind, it is evidently unjust, and enforced by a penalty no less than infinite, as obedience is impossible, the requirement is infinite tyranny. It is evident, that the requirement here is to change our *moral character*; our *moral disposition*; in other words, to change that abiding preference of our minds, which prefers sin to holiness; self-gratification to the glory of God. I understand a change of heart, as the term is here used, to be just what we mean by a change of mind in regard to the supreme object of pursuit; a change in the choice of an *end*, not merely in the choice of *means*. An individual may change his mind, and prefer, at one time, one set of means, and at another time, another set, to accomplish the same end: a man who proposes to himself as the supreme object of pursuit his own happiness, may at one time imagine that his highest happiness lies in the possession of worldly goods, and in pursuit of this end, may give himself wholly to the acquisition of wealth, in pursuing which he may often change his choice of means; at one time he may pursue merchandise; at another, the profession of law; and still again, the profession of medicine; but all these are only changes of mind in regard to the means of accomplishing the same selfish end. Again, he may see that his happiness does not consist in the abundance of wealth; that he is to exist forever; that he therefore has a higher interest in the things of eternity than in those of time; he may accordingly enlarge his selfish aims, carry forward his interest into eternity, and propose as the supreme object of pursuit, the salvation of his soul. It is now an eternal, instead of a temporal interest that he seeks; which he proposes as the supreme object of pursuit; but still the end is his own happiness; the end is substantially the same, it is only the exercise of selfishness on a more ample and extended scale; instead of being satisfied with the happiness of time, selfishness aims at securing the bliss of eternity. When confining his views and desires to the acquisition of worldly good, he aimed at engrossing the affections, the services, the honors, and the wealth of the world; he now "lengthens the cords, and strengthens the stakes" of his selfishness; carries forward his aims, his desires, and exertions towards eternity; sets himself to pray, to read his Bible, and become marvelously religious; and would fain engross the affections, and enlist the powers, and command the services of all heaven, and of the eternal God. While his views were confined to earthly things, he was satisfied that *men* should be his servants; but now, in the selfish pursuit of his own eternal happiness, he would fain call in all the attributes of Jehovah to serve him. But in all this there is no change of heart; he may have often changed in the choice of means, but his end has been always the same; his own happiness has been his idol.

A change of heart, then, consists in changing the controlling preference of the mind in regard to the *end* of pursuit. The selfish heart is a preference of self-interest to the glory of God and the interests of his kingdom. A new heart consists in a preference of the glory of God and the interests of his kingdom to one's own happiness. In other words, it is a change from selfishness to benevolence, from having a supreme regard to one's own interest to an

absorbing and controlling choice of the happiness and glory of God and his kingdom.

It is a change in the choice of a *Supreme Ruler*. The conduct of impenitent sinners demonstrates that they prefer Satan as the ruler of the world, they obey his laws, electioneer for him, and are zealous for his interests, even to martyrdom. They carry their attachment to him and his government so far as to sacrifice both body and soul to promote his interest and establish his dominion. A new heart is the choice of **JEHOVAH** as the supreme ruler; a deep-seated and abiding preference of his laws, and government, and character, and person, as the supreme Legislator and Governor of the universe.

Thus the world is divided into two great political parties; the difference between them is, that one party choose Satan as the god of this world, yield obedience to his laws, and are devoted to his interest. Selfishness is the law of Satan's empire, and all impenitent sinners yield it a willing obedience. The other party choose Jehovah for their governor, and consecrate themselves, with all their interests, to his service and glory. Nor does this change imply a constitutional alteration of the powers of body or mind, any more than a change of mind in regard to the form or administration of a human government.

There are certain things in regard to mind, with which we become familiar by experience. For instance, we know by experience that it is the nature of mind to be controlled in its individual exercises and affections, by a deep-seated *disposition or preference* of a particular course or object. It is not necessary here, to enter into the philosophy of this fact, but simply to recognize the fact itself. For instance, when Adam was first created, and awoke into being, before he had obeyed or disobeyed his Maker, he could have had no moral character at all: he had exercised no affections, no desires, nor put forth any actions. In this state he was a complete moral agent; and in this respect in the image of his Maker; but as yet could have had no moral character; for moral character cannot be a subject of creation, but attaches to voluntary action. Do not understand me to affirm, that any considerable time elapsed between the creation of Adam and his possessing a moral character. It is presumed, that as soon as he awoke into being, and had knowledge of the existence and character of his Maker, the evidences of which doubtless shone all around him, he chose *Him* as his supreme ruler, and voluntarily dedicated all his powers to his service. This preference of God, and his glory, and service, over his own self-interest and every thing else, constituted his *disposition*, or his moral character; in other words, it was a perfectly holy heart. Out of this heart, or preference, flowed as from a fountain the pure waters of obedience. All the subordinate movements, affections, choices, and purposes of the mind, and all the outward actions, flowed from this strong and governing preference for God and his service. Thus he went forth to dress God's garden, and keep it. Now, for a time, this preference of Adam

was strong and abiding enough to insure perfect obedience in all things; for mind will act in consistency with an abiding preference, according to the strength and permanency of this preference. For instance, the strong preference that a man may have for home, may forbid his entertaining any purpose of going abroad. The strength of his preference for his wife, may prevent his having any desires for improper intimacy with other women; and the probability, and I may say possibility, of betraying him into acts of infidelity to his wife, may depend upon the strength and abiding energy of his preference of her to all other women. So while the preference of Adam remained unshaken, its energy gave direction and character to all his feelings and to all his conduct; and that which must stamp perfection upon the obedience of heaven, is the great strength and continually abiding energy of their preference for God and his service. Indeed the continued holiness of God depends upon the same cause, and flows from the same fountain. His holiness does not consist in the substance of his nature, but in his preference of right. His holiness must be voluntary, and he is immutably holy, because he is infinitely so. In other words, his preference of right is infinitely strong, so strong and so abiding as never to admit of change; of any conduct inconsistent with it. Adam was perfectly holy, but not infinitely so. As his preference for God was not infinitely strong, it was possible that it might be changed, and we have the melancholy fact written in characters that cannot be misunderstood, on every side of us, that an occasion occurred on which he actually changed it. Satan, in the person of the serpent, presented a temptation of a very peculiar character. It was addressed to the constitutional appetites of both soul and body; to the appetite for food in the body, and for knowledge in the mind. These appetites were constitutional; they were not in themselves sinful, but their *unlawful indulgence* was sin. The proposal of the serpent was, that he should change his mind in regard to the supreme end of pursuit; and thus change his heart, or his whole moral character. "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? and the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Now the foundation of holiness in Adam, and that which constituted his holy heart, was the supreme choice that God should rule; the supreme preference of God and his glory to his own happiness or interest. It is easy to see, therefore, that the object aimed at by the serpent was to affect a change in the *supreme end* of pursuit. It was to prefer his own gratification to obedience to his Maker; to become as a god himself instead of obeying Jehovah; to pursue as a supreme end self-gratification instead of the glory of God. In yielding therefore to this proposal, in changing his mind upon this fundamental point, he changed his own heart, or that controlling preference which was at once the foundation, and fountain,

of all obedience. Now this was a real change of heart; from a perfectly holy, to a perfectly sinful one. But here was no constitutional change, no change in the substance of either body or mind. It was not a change in the powers of moral agency themselves, but simply in the use of them; in consecrating their energies to a different end. Now suppose God to have come out upon Adam with the command of the text, "Make to you a new heart, for why will you die." Could Adam have justly answered, Dost thou think that I can change my own heart? Can I, who have a heart totally depraved, can I change that heart? Might not the Almighty have answered him in words of fire, Rebel, you have just changed your heart from holiness to sin, now change it back from sin to holiness.

Suppose a human sovereign should establish a government, and propose as the great end of pursuit, to produce the greatest amount of happiness possible within his kingdom. He enacts wise and benevolent laws, calculated to promote this object to which he conforms all his own conduct; in the administration of which, he employs all his wisdom and energies, and requires all his subjects to sympathize with him; to aim at the same object; to be governed by the same principles; to aim supremely and constantly at the same end; the promotion of the highest interests of the community. Suppose these laws to be so framed, that universal obedience would necessarily result in universal happiness. Now suppose that one individual, after a season of obedience and devotion to the interest of the government and the glory of his sovereign, should be induced to withdraw his influence and energies from promoting the public good, and set up for himself; suppose him to say, I will no longer be governed by the principles of good will to the community, and find my own happiness in promoting the public interest; but will aim at promoting my own happiness and glory, in my own way, and let the sovereign and the subjects take care for themselves. "Charity begins at home." Now suppose him thus to set up for himself; to propose his own happiness and aggrandizement as the supreme object of his pursuit, and should not hesitate to trample upon the laws and encroach upon the rights, both of his sovereign and the subjects, wherever those laws or rights lay in the way of the accomplishment of his designs. It is easy to see, that he has become a rebel; has changed his heart, and consequently his conduct; has set up an interest not only separate from, but opposed to the interest of his rightful sovereign. He has changed his heart from good to bad; from being an obedient subject he has become a rebel; from obeying his sovereign, he has set up an independent sovereignty; from trying to influence all men to obey the government, from seeking supremely the prosperity and the glory of his sovereign, he becomes himself a little sovereign; and as Absalom caught the men of Israel and kissed them, and thus stole away their hearts; so he now endeavors to engross the affections, to enlist the sympathies, to command the respect and obedience of all around him. Now what would constitute a change of heart in this man towards his sovereign? I answer, for him to go back, to change his mind in regard to the supreme object of pursuit;—to prefer the glory of his

sovereign and the good of the public to his own separate interest, would constitute a change of heart.

Now this is the case with the sinner; God has established a government, and proposed by the exhibition of his own character, to produce the greatest practicable amount of happiness in the universe. He has enacted laws wisely calculated to promote this object, to which he conforms all his own conduct, and to which he requires all his subjects perfectly and undeviatingly to conform theirs. After a season of obedience, Adam changed his heart, and set up for himself. So with every sinner, although he *does not first obey, as Adam did*; yet his wicked heart consists in setting up his own interest in opposition to the interest and government of God. In aiming to promote his own private happiness, in a way that is opposed to the general good. Self-gratification becomes the law to which he conforms his conduct. It is that minding of the flesh, which is enmity against God. A change of heart, therefore, is to prefer a different *end*. To prefer supremely the glory of God and the public good, to the promotion of his own interest; and whenever this preference is changed, we see of course a corresponding change of conduct. If a man change sides in politics, you will see him meeting with those that entertain the same views and feelings with himself; devising plans and using his influence to elect the candidate which he has now chosen. He has new political friends on the one side, and new political enemies on the other. So with a sinner; if his heart is changed, you will see that Christians become his friends—Christ his candidate. He aims at honoring him and promoting his interest in all his ways. Before, the language of his conduct was, “Let Satan govern the world.” Now, the language of his heart and of his life is, “Let Christ rule King of nations, as he is King of saints.” Before, his conduct said, “O Satan, let thy kingdom come, and let thy will be done.” Now, his heart, his life, his lips cry out, “O Jesus, let thy kingdom come, let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

In proof that the change which I have described constitutes a change of heart, if any proof is necessary—I observe, first, that he who actually does prefer the glory of God, and the interest of his kingdom, to his own selfish interest, is a Christian; and that he who actually prefers his own selfish interest to the glory of God, is an impenitent sinner.

The fundamental difference lies in this ruling preference, this fountain, this heart, out of which flows their emotions, their affections, and actions. As the difference between them consists not in the substance of their minds or bodies, but in the voluntary state of mind in which they are, it is just as unphilosophical, absurd, and unnecessary, to suppose that a physical or constitutional change has taken place in him who has the new heart, as to infer, that because a man has changed his politics, therefore his nature is changed. Further, this new preference needs only to become deep and energetic enough in its influence, to stamp the perfection of heaven upon the whole character. From long cherished habits of sin, and acting under the

dominion of an opposite preference, when it comes really to be changed, it is often weak and measurably inefficient; and consequently the mind often acts in inconsistency with this general preference. Accordingly, God says to Israel, "How weak is thine heart!" Like a man who is so little under the influence either of principle or of affection for his wife, that although upon the whole, and in general, he prefers her to any other woman, yet he may occasionally be guilty of an act of infidelity to her. Now what is needed in the case of a Christian is, that his old habits of thought, and feeling, and action, should be broken up; that his new preference should gain strength, stability, firmness, and perpetuity; and thus take the control of the whole man. This process constitutes sanctification. Every act of obedience to God strengthens this preference, and renders future obedience more natural. The perfect control of this preference over all the moral movements of the mind, brings a man back to where Adam was previous to the fall, and constitutes perfect holiness.

Once more—If a change of heart was physical, or a change in the constitution of the mind, it would have no moral character. The *change*, to have moral character, must be *voluntary*. To constitute a change of *heart*, it must not only be voluntary, but must be a change in the *governing preference of the mind*. It must be a change in regard to the supreme object of pursuit.

Finally, it is a fact in the experience of every Christian, that the change through which he has passed is nothing else than that which I have described. In speaking from experience, he can say, Whereas I once preferred my own separate interest to the glory of my Maker, now I prefer his glory and the interests of his kingdom, and consecrate all my powers to the promotion of them forever.

2. The second inquiry is, whether the requirement of the text is reasonable and equitable. The answer to this question must depend upon the nature of the duty to be performed. If the change be a physical one, a change in the constitution or substance of the soul, it is clearly not within the scope of our ability, and the answer to the question must be, No, it is not reasonable nor equitable. To maintain that we are under obligation to do what we have no power to do, is absurd. If we are under an obligation to do a thing, and do it not, we sin. For the blame-worthiness of sin consists in its being the violation of an obligation. But if we are under an obligation to do what we have no power to do, then sin is unavoidable; we are forced to sin by a natural necessity. But this is contrary to right reason, to make sin to consist in any thing that is forced upon us by the necessity of nature. Besides, if it is sin, we are bound to repent of it, heartily to blame ourselves, and justify the requirement of God; but it is plainly impossible for us to blame ourselves for not doing what we are conscious we never had any power to do. Suppose God should command a man to fly; would the command impose upon him any obligation, until he was furnished with wings? Cer-

tainly not. But suppose, on his failing to obey, God should require him to repent of his disobedience, and threaten to send him to hell if he did not heartily blame himself, and justify the requirement of God. He must cease to be a reasonable being before he can do this. He knows that God never gave him power to fly, and therefore he had no right to require it of him. His natural sense of justice, and of the foundation of obligation, is outraged, and he indignantly and conscientiously throws back the requirement into his Maker's face. Repentance, in this case, is a natural impossibility; while he is a reasonable being, he knows that he is not to blame for not flying without wings; and however much he may regret his not being able to obey the requirement, and however great may be his fear of the wrath of God, still to blame himself and justify God is a natural impossibility. As, therefore, God requires men to make to themselves a new heart, on pain of eternal death, it is the strongest possible evidence that they are able to do it. To say that he has commanded them to do it, without telling them they are able, is consummate trifling. Their ability is implied as strongly as it can be, in the command itself. From all this it will be seen, that the answer to the question, whether the requirement in the text is just, must turn upon the question of man's ability; and the question of ability must turn upon the nature of the change itself. If the change is physical, it is clearly beyond the power of man; it is something over which he has no more control than he had over the creation of his soul and body. But if the change is moral—in other words, if it be voluntary, a change of choice or preference, such as I have described, then the answer to the question, Is the requirement of the text just and reasonable? clearly is, Yes, it is entirely reasonable and just;

1. Because you have all the powers of moral agency; and the thing required is, not to alter these powers, but to employ them in the service of your Maker. God has created these powers, and you can and do use them. He gives you power to obey or disobey; and your sin is, that while he sustains these powers, you prostitute them to the service of sin and Satan.

Again—These powers are as well suited to obedience as to disobedience. Your wickedness consists in a wrong but obstinate choice of sin. But is it not as easy to choose right as wrong? Are not the motives to a right choice infinitely greater than to a wrong one? Could Adam reasonably have objected that he was unable to change his choice? Could Satan object that he had no power to change the governing preference of his mind, and to prefer the glory of his Maker to rebellion against his throne? If Satan, or Adam, or you, can reasonably bring forward this objection, then there is no such thing as sin in earth or hell.

Again—God only requires of you to choose and act reasonably, for certainly it is in accordance with right reason to prefer the glory of God, and the interest of his immense kingdom, to your own private interest. It is an infinitely greater good; therefore you, and God, and all his creatures, are bound to prefer it. But I said the motives to a right preference are infinitely

greater than to a wrong one. Sinners often complain that they are so influenced by motives, that they cannot resist iniquity. They often excuse their sins, by pleading that the temptation was too strong for them. Sinner, why is it, while you are so easily influenced by motives as to complain that you cannot resist them; that you are too weak to resist their influence to sin; that you are strong enough to resist the world of motives that come rolling upon you like a wave of fire, to do right and obey your Maker?

When the Son of God approaches you, gathering motives from heaven, earth, and hell, and pours them in a focal blaze upon your mind, how is it that you are strong enough to resist? You, whose mind is yielding as air to motives to sin; who are all weakness, and complain that you cannot resist when tempted to disobey God, can exert such a giant strength, I had almost said the strength of Omnipotence, in resisting the infinite weight of motive that rolls upon you from every quarter of the universe, to obey God. It is clear that if you did not exert the whole strength of moral agency to resist, these considerations would change your heart.

3. I come now to the third and last inquiry, viz: How is this requirement, to "make to yourself a new heart," consistent with the often repeated declarations of the Bible, that a new heart is the gift and work of God. The Bible ascribes conversion, or a new heart, to four different agencies. Oftentimes it is ascribed to the Spirit of God. And if you consult the Scriptures, you will find it still more frequently ascribed to the truth; as, "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth"—"The truth shall make you free"—"Sanctify them through thy truth"—"The law of God is perfect, converting the soul." It is sometimes ascribed to the preacher, or to him who presents the truth; "He that winneth souls is wise:" Paul says, "I have begotten you through the gospel"—"He that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." Sometimes it is spoken of as the work of the sinner himself; thus the apostle says, "Ye have purified yourselves by obeying the truth;" "I thought on my ways," says the Psalmist, "and turned unto the Lord." Again he says, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart replied, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." Now the question is, Are all these declarations of Scripture consistent with each other? They are all true; they all mean just as they say; nor is there any real disagreement between them. There is a sense in which conversion is the work of God. There is a sense in which it is the effect of truth. There is a sense in which the preacher does it. And it is also the appropriate work of the sinner himself.

The fact is, that the actual turning, or change, is the sinner's own act. The agent who induces him, is the Spirit of God. A secondary agent, is the preacher, or individual who presents the truth. The truth is the instrument, or motive, which the Spirit uses to induce the sinner to turn. Suppose yourself to be standing on the bank of the Falls of Niagara. As you stand upon the verge of the precipice, you behold a man lost in deep reverie, approaching its

verge unconscious of his danger. He approaches nearer and nearer, until he actually lifts his foot to take the final step that shall plunge him in destruction. At this moment you lift your warning voice above the roar of the foaming waters, and cry out, *Stop*. The voice pierces his ear, and breaks the charm that binds him; he turns instantly upon his heel, all pale and aghast he retires, quivering, from the the verge of death. He reels, and almost swoons with horror; turns and walks slowly to the public house; you follow him; the manifest agitation in his countenance calls numbers around him; and on *your* approach, he points to you, and says, That man saved my life. Here he ascribes the work to you; and certainly there is a sense in which you had saved him. But, on being further questioned, he says, *Stop!* how that word rings in my ears. Oh, that was to me the word of life. Here he ascribes it to the *word* that aroused him, and caused him to turn. But, on conversing still further, he said, had I not turned at that instant, I should have been a dead man. Here he speaks of it, and truly, as his own act; but directly you hear him say, O the mercy of God; if God had not interposed, I should have been lost. Now the only defect in this illustration is this: In the case supposed, the only interference on the part of God, was a *providential* one; and the only sense in which the saving of the man's life is ascribed to him, is in a providential sense. But in the conversion of a sinner there is something more than the providence of God employed; for here not only does the providence of God so order it, that the preacher cries, *Stop*, but the Spirit of God forces the truth home upon him with such tremendous power as to induce him to turn.

Not only does the preacher cry *Stop*, but, through the living voice of the preacher, the Spirit cries *Stop*. The preacher cries, "Turn ye, why will ye die." The Spirit pours the expostulation home with such power, that the sinner turns. Now, in speaking of this change, it is perfectly proper to say, that the Spirit turned him, just as you would say of a man, who had persuaded another to change his mind on the subject of politics, that he had converted him, and brought him over. It is also proper to say that the truth converted him; as in a case when the political sentiments of a man were changed by a certain argument, we should say, that argument brought him over. So also with perfect propriety may we ascribe the change to the living preacher, or to him who had presented the motives; just as we should say of a lawyer who had prevailed in his argument with a jury; he has got his case, he has converted the jury. It is also with the same propriety ascribed to the individual himself whose heart is changed; we should say that he had changed his mind, he has come over, he has repented. Now it is strictly true, and true in the most absolute and highest sense; the act is his own act, the turning is his own turning, while God by the truth has induced him to turn; still it is strictly true that he has turned and has done it himself. Thus you see the sense in which it is the work of God, and also the sense in which it is the sinner's own work. The Spirit of God, by the truth, influences the sinner to change, and in this sense is the efficient cause of the change. But the sinner

actually changes, and is therefore himself, in the most proper sense, the author of the change. There are some who, on reading their Bibles, fasten their eyes upon those passages that ascribe the work to the Spirit of God, and seem to overlook those that ascribe it to man, and speak of it as the sinner's own act. When they have quoted Scripture to prove it is the work of God, they seem to think they have proved that it is that in which man is passive, and that it can in no sense be the work of man. Some months since a tract was written, the title of which was, "Regeneration is the effect of Divine Power." The writer goes on to prove that the work is wrought by the Spirit of God, and there he stops. Now it had been just as true, just as philosophical, and just as Scriptural, if he had said, that conversion was the work of man. It was easy to prove that it was the work of God, in the sense in which I have explained it. The writer, therefore, tells the truth, so far as he goes; but he has told only half the truth. For while there is a sense in which it is the work of God, as he has shown, there is also a sense in which it is the work of man, as we have just seen. The very title to this tract is a stumbling block. It tells the truth, but it does not tell the whole truth. And a tract might be written upon this proposition, that "*conversion or regeneration is the work of man*;" which would be just as true, just as Scriptural, and just as philosophical, as the one to which I have alluded. Thus the writer, in his zeal to recognize and honor God as concerned in this work, by leaving out the fact that a change of heart is the sinner's *own act*, has left the sinner strongly intrenched, with his weapons in his rebellious hands, stoutly resisting the claims of his Maker, and waiting passively for God to make him a new heart. Thus you see the consistency between the requirement of the text, and the declared fact that God is the author of the new heart. God commands you to do it, expects you to do it, and if it ever is done, you must do it.

I shall conclude this discourse with several inferences and remarks.

1st. *Sinners make their own wicked hearts.*

Their preference of sin is their own voluntary act. They make self-gratification the rule to which they conform all their conduct. When they come into being, the first principle that we discover in their conduct, is their determination to gratify themselves. It soon comes to pass that any effort to thwart them in the gratification of their appetites, is met by them with stout resistance, they seem to set their hearts fully to pursue their own happiness, and gratify themselves, come what will; and thus they will successively make war on their nurse, their parents, and their God, when ever they find that *their* requirements prohibit the pursuit of this end. Now this is purely a voluntary state of mind. This state of mind is not a subject of creation, it is entirely the result of temptation to selfishness, arising out of the circumstances under which the child comes into being. This preference to self-interest, is suffered by the sinner to grow with his growth, and strengthen

with his strength, until this desperately wicked heart bears him onward to the gates of hell.

2dly. *From what has been said, the necessity of a change of heart is most manifest.*

The state of mind in which impenitent sinners are, is called by the apostle the "carnal mind;" or as it should have been rendered, "the minding of the flesh is enmity against God." The child at first gives up the rein to the bodily appetites. God requires him to keep under his body, and to make it the instrument of his soul in the service of God—to subject and subordinate all its passions to the will of its Maker. But instead of this, he makes the gratification of his appetites and passions, the law of his life. It is that law in his members, of which the apostle speaks, as warring against the law of his mind. This state of mind, is the direct opposite of the character and requirements of God. With this heart, the salvation of the sinner is a manifest impossibility.

3d. *In the light of this subject, you can see the nature and degree of the sinner's dependence on the Spirit of God.*

The Spirit's agency is not needed to give him power, but to overcome his voluntary obstinacy. Some persons seem to suppose that the Spirit is employed to give the sinner *power*—that he is *unable* to obey God, without the Spirit's agency. I am alarmed when I hear such declarations as these; and were it not, that I suppose there is a sense in which a man's heart may be better than his head, I should feel bound to maintain, that persons holding this sentiment, were not Christians at all. I have already shown that a man is under no obligation to do what he has no ability to do; in other words that his obligation, is only commensurate with his ability. That he cannot blame himself for not having exerted a power, that he never possessed. If he believes, therefore, that he has no power to obey his Maker, it is impossible that he should blame himself for not doing it. And if he believes that the Spirit's agency is indispensable to make him able; consistency must compel him to maintain, that without this superadded agency, he is under no obligation to obey. This giving the sinner *power*, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to obey God, is what the Arminians call a *gracious* ability, which terms are a manifest absurdity. What is grace? It is undeserved favor; something to which we have no claim in justice. That which may be withheld without injustice. If this is a true definition, it is plain that a *gracious ability to do our duty* is absurd. It is a dictate of reason, of conscience, of common sense, and of our natural sense of justice, that if God require of us the performance of any duty or act, he is bound in justice to give us *power* to obey; i. e. he must give us the faculties and strength to perform the act. But if *justice* require this, why call it a *gracious* ability. Natural ability to do our duty cannot be a *gracious* ability. To call it so, is to confound grace and justice as meaning the same thing. The sin of disobe-

dience then must lie, not in his having broken the law of God, but solely in his not having complied with the strivings of the Spirit. Accordingly the definition of sin should be, upon these principles, not that "sin is a transgression of the law," but that it consists in not yielding to the influence of the Spirit. While therefore he is not sensible that the Spirit is giving him power, he can feel under no obligation to be converted; nor can he, upon any principles of reason, blame himself. How, I would ask, is it possible that with these views he can repent? And how, upon these principles, is he to blame for not having repented and turned to the Lord?

But, to illustrate both the nature and degree of man's dependence on the Spirit, suppose a man to be bent upon self-murder; in the absence of his wife he loads his pistols, and prepares to commit the horrid deed. His little child observes the disorder of his mind, and says, Father, what are you going to do? *Be still*, he replies, I am going to blow my brains out. The little one weeps, spreads out its little beggar hands, beseeches him to desist, and pours out his little prayers, and tears, and agonizing entreaties, to spare his life. Now if the eloquence of this child's grief, his prayers, and tears, could prevail to change the obstinacy of his purpose, he would need no other influence to subdue and change his mind. But the parent persisting, the child screams to his mother, who flies at the voice of its entreaty, and on being told the cause of its anguish, hastens, upon the wings of terror, to her husband's apartment, and conjures him to change his purpose. By his love for his family—by their love for him—by their dependence upon him—in view of the torn heart, and distraction of the wife of his bosom—by the anguish, the tears, the helplessness of his babes—by the regard he has for his own soul—by the hope of heaven—by the terrors of hell—by every thing tender and persuasive in life—by all that is solemn in the final judgment, and terrible in the pains of the second death, she conjures him, over and over again, not to rush upon his own destruction. Now if all this can move him, he needs no other and higher influence to change his mind. But when she fails in her efforts, suppose she could summon all the angels of God, and they also should fail to move and melt him by their unearthly eloquence; here, then, some higher power must interfere, or the man is lost. But just as he puts his pistol to his ear, the Spirit of God, who knows perfectly the state of his mind, and understands all the reasons that have led him to this desperate determination, gathers such a world of motive, and pours them in such a focal blaze upon his soul, that he instantly quails, drops the weapon from his nerveless hand, relinquishes his purpose of death forever, falls upon his knees, and gives glory to God. Now it was the strength of the man's voluntary purpose of self-destruction alone, that made the Spirit's agency at all necessary in the case. Would he have yielded to all the motives that had been before presented, and should have subdued him, no interposition of the Holy Spirit had been necessary. But it was the wickedness, and the obstinacy of the wretch, that laid the only foundation for the Spirit's interference. Now this is the sinner's case. He has set his heart fully to do evil, and if the prayers and tears of

friends, and of the church of God—the warning of ministers—the rebukes of Providence—the commands, the exhortations, the tears, and groans, and death of God's dear Son: if the offer of heaven, or the threatening of hell could overcome his obstinate preference of sin, the Spirit's agency would be uncalled for. But because no human persuasion, no motive that man or angel can get home upon his mind, will cause him to turn; therefore the Spirit of God must interpose to shake his preference, and turn him back from hell. The degree of his dependence upon the Spirit, is just the degree of his obstinacy; were he but slightly inclined to pursue the road to death, *men* could change him without calling upon God for help; but just in proportion to the strength of his preference for sin, is it necessary that the Spirit should interpose or he is lost. Thus you see, the sinner's dependence upon the Spirit of God, instead of being his excuse, is that which constitutes his guilt.

4th. Again—*You see from this subject the NATURE of the Spirit's agency.*

That he does not act by direct physical contact upon the mind, but that he uses the truth as his sword to pierce the sinner; and that the motives presented in the gospel are the instruments he uses to change the sinner's heart. Some have doubted this, and supposed that it is equivalent to denying the Spirit's agency altogether to maintain that he converts sinners by motives. Others have denied the possibility of changing the heart by motives. But did not the serpent change Adam's heart by motives; and cannot the Spirit of God with infinitely higher motives exert as great power over mind as he can? Can the old serpent change a heart from a perfectly holy to a perfectly sinful one by the power of motives, and cannot the infinitely wise God, do as much as Satan did? Verily, to deny this, looks much like detracting from the wisdom and power of God. But that the Scripture abundantly declares that the Spirit converts sinners by the power of motive is most manifest—"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," is one out of the many express declarations upon this subject. The philosophy of this subject is settled by the Bible; it is a subject upon which we are not at liberty to speculate, and form our own philosophical theories, and maintain that by direct physical contact, irrespective of truth, God interposes and changes the sinner's heart. When God says, "Of his own will he has begotten us with the word of truth," this settles the question; and is equivalent to saying, that he has not begotten us in any other manner.

The very terms used by our Savior in the promise of the Spirit to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come, strongly imply the mode of his agency. The term rendered *Comforter* in our translation of the Bible, is *Parakletos*; it is the same term which, in one of the epistles of John, is rendered *Advocate*. The term is there applied to Jesus Christ. It is there said, "If any man sin, we have a *Parakletos*, or an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous." In this passage Jesus Christ is spoken of as the Advocate of men with God. The *Parakletos*, or *Comforter*,

promised by our Savior, is represented as God's Advocate, to plead His cause with men. The term rendered reprove or convince in our translation is a law term, and signifies the summing up of an argument, and establishing or demonstrating the sinner's guilt. Thus the strivings of the Spirit of God with men, is not a physical scuffling, but a debate; a strife not of body with body, but of mind with mind; and that in the action and reaction of vehement argumentation. From these remarks, it is easy to answer the question sometimes put by individuals who seem to be entirely in the dark upon this subject, whether in converting the soul the Spirit acts directly on the mind, or on the truth. This is the same nonsense as if you should ask, whether an earthly advocate who had gained his cause, did it by acting directly and physically on the jury, or on his argument.

5th. Again—*It is evident from this subject that God never does, in changing the sinner's heart, what he requires the sinner to do.*

Some persons, as I have already observed, seem disposed to be passive, to wait for some mysterious influence, like an electric shock, to change their hearts. But in this attitude, and with these views, they may wait till the day of judgment, and God will never do their duty for them. The fact is, sinners, that God requires you to turn, and what he requires of you, he cannot do for you. It must be your own voluntary act. It is not the appropriate work of God to do what he requires of you. Do not wait then for him to do your duty, but do it immediately yourself, on pain of eternal death.

6th. *This subject shews also, that if the sinner ever has a new heart, he must obey the command of the text, and make it himself.*

But here some one may interpose and say, Is not this taking the work out of God's hands, and robbing him of the glory? No. It is the only view of the subject that gives the glory to God. Some in their zeal to magnify the grace of the gospel, entirely overthrow it. They maintain the sinner's *inability*, and thereby do away his guilt. Instead of considering him a guilty, voluntary rebel, and worthy of eternal death, they make him a helpless, unfortunate creature, unable to do what God requires of him. Instead of making his only difficulty to consist in an *unwillingness*, they insist upon his *inability*, and thus destroy his guilt, and of course the grace displayed in his salvation. For what grace can there be in helping an unfortunate individual? If sinners are unable to obey God, precisely in proportion to their *inability*, are they guiltless. But if they are *unwilling*, if their *cannot* is a *will not*, we have already seen that their guilt is in proportion to the strength of their unwillingness, and grace in their salvation must be equal to their guilt. Nor does it detract from the glory of God that the act of turning is the sinner's own act. The fact is, he never does, and never will turn, unless God induces him to do it; so that although the act is the sinner's own, yet the glory belongs to God, inasmuch as he caused him to act. If a man had made up his mind to take his own life, and you should, by taking the greatest pains, and at great expense, pre-

vail upon him to desist, would you deserve no credit for the influences you exerted in the case? Though changing his mind and relinquishing his purpose of self-destruction was his own act, inasmuch as you was the sole cause of his turning, and as it was certain that had you not interfered he would have done the horrid deed, are you not entitled to just as much praise as if his own agency had not been at all concerned in turning? Might it not in truth be said that you had turned him?

7th. But again—*The idea that the Spirit converts sinners by the truth, is the only view of the subject that honors either the Spirit, or the truth of God.*

The work of conversion is spoken of in the Bible as a work of exceeding great power; and I once heard a clergyman, expatiating upon the great power of God in conversion—although he appeared to view it as a physical alteration of the constitution of man, as the implantation of a new principle, or taste—assert that it was a greater exertion of power than that which hung out the heavens. The reason which he assigned for its being such a great exertion of power was, that in the creation of the material universe, he had no opposition, but in the conversion of a soul, he had all the powers of hell to oppose him. Now this is whimsical and ridiculous enough. As if the opposition of hell could oppose any obstacle in the way of physical Omnipotence. The power which God exerts in the conversion of a soul, is *moral* power; it is that kind of power by which a statesman sways the mind of a senate; or by which an advocate moves and bows the heart of a jury; by which “David bowed the heart of all Israel, as the heart of one man.” Now when we consider the deep-rooted selfishness of the sinner; his long cherished habits of sin; his multifarious excuses and refuges of lies; it is a most sublime exhibition of wisdom and of moral power to pursue him step by step with truth, to hunt him from his refuges of lies, to constrain him by the force of argument alone, to yield up his selfishness and dedicate himself to the service of God. This reflects a glory and a lustre over the truth of God and the agency of the Holy Spirit, that at once delights and amazes the beholder.

8th. But again—*The idea that the Spirit uses motives to change the heart, is the only view that gives consistency, and meaning to the often repeated injunction, not to resist the Holy Ghost—not to strive with his Maker.*

For if the Spirit operated upon the mind by direct physical contact, the idea of effectually resisting physical omnipotence is ridiculous. The same thought applies to those passages that caution us against grieving and quenching the Spirit.

9th. Again—*You see from this subject that a sinner, under the influence of the Spirit of God, is just as free as a jury under the arguments of an advocate.*

Here also you may see the importance of right views on this point. Suppose a lawyer, in addressing a jury, should not expect to change their minds

by any thing he could say, but should wait for an invisible, and physical agency, to be exerted by the Holy Ghost upon them. And suppose, on the other hand, that the jury thought that in making up their verdict, they must be passive, and wait for a direct physical agency to be exerted upon them. In vain might the lawyer plead, and in vain might the jury hear, for until he pressed his arguments as if he was determined to bow their hearts, and until they make up their minds, and decide the question, and thus act like rational beings, both his pleading, and their hearing is in vain. So if a minister goes into a desk to preach to sinners, believing that they have no power to obey the truth, and under the impression that a direct physical influence must be exerted upon them before they *can* believe, and if his audience be of the same opinion, in vain does he preach, and in vain do they hear, "for they are yet in their sins;" they sit and quietly wait for some invisible hand to be stretched down from heaven, and perform some surgical operation, infuse some new principle, or implant some constitutional taste; *after* which they suppose they shall be *able* to obey God. Ministers should labor with sinners, as a lawyer does with a jury, and upon the same principles of mental philosophy; and the sinner should weigh his arguments, and make up his mind as upon oath and for his life, and give a verdict upon the spot, according to law and evidence. But here perhaps some one will ask, If truth, when seen in all its bearings and relations, is the instrument of converting the sinner, why will he not be converted in hell, where it is supposed that all the truth will burst upon his mind in all its burning reality? In answer to this, I observe, that the motive that prevails to turn the convicted rebel to God, will, in hell, be wanting. When the sinner is crowded with conviction and ready to go to despair, and ready to flee and hide himself from the presence of his Maker, he is met by the *offer of reconciliation*, which, together with the other motives that are weighing like a mountain upon his mind, sweetly constrain him to yield himself up to God. But in hell the offer of reconciliation will be wanting; the sinner will be in despair; and while in despair it is a natural impossibility to turn his heart to God. Let a man in this life so completely ruin his fortune as to have no hope of retrieving it; in this state of absolute despair, no motive can reach him to make him put forth an effort; he has no motive to attempt it; so if his reputation is so completely gone that he has no hope of retrieving it, in this state of despair, there is no possibility of reclaiming him; no motive can reach him and call forth an effort to redeem his character, because he is without hope. So in hell, the poor dying sinner will be shut up in despair; his character is gone; his fortune for eternity is lost; there is no offer, no hope of reconciliation; and punishment will but drive him further and further from God forever and ever.

10th. *But, says the objector, if right apprehensions of truth presented by the Spirit of God convert a sinner, does it not follow that his ignorance is the cause of his sin?*

I answer, No! Had Adam kept what truth he knew steadily before his mind, he doubtless would have resisted the temptation; but suffering his

mind to be diverted from the reasons for obedience to the motives to disobedience, he failed, of course. When he had fallen, and selfishness had become predominant, he was averse to knowing and weighing the reasons for turning again to God; and if ever he was turned the Spirit of God must have forced the subject upon him. So with every sinner: he at first sins against what knowledge he has by overlooking the motives to obedience, and yielding himself up to the motives to disobedience, and when once he has adopted the selfish principle, his ignorance becomes wilful and sinful, and unless the Spirit of God compel him, he *will* not see. He knows the truth to a sufficient extent to leave him without excuse, but he will not *consider* it and let it have its effect upon him.

But the objector may still ask, Is it not true, after all, if a full and a sufficiently impressive knowledge of truth is all that is necessary to subdue the sinner, that he only needs to know the true character of God to love it, and that his enmity against God arises out of his false notions of him? Is it not a *false* and not the *true* character of God that he hates? I answer, No! It is the true character of God that he hates. He hates God for what he *is*, and not for what he is not. The sinner's character is selfishness; God's character is benevolence. These are eternal opposites. The sinner hates God because he is opposed to his selfishness. While the man remains selfish, it is absurd to say that he is reconciled to the true character of God. But is not his ignorance the cause of his *selfishness*? No! he knows better than to be selfish. It is true he does not, nor will he unless compelled by the Holy Spirit, *consider* the unreasonableness of selfishness. The work of the Holy Spirit does not consist merely in giving *instruction*, but in compelling him to *consider* truths which he already knows—to think upon his ways and turn to the Lord. He forces upon his *attention* and *consideration* those motives which he hates to consider and feel the weight of. It is probable, if not certain, that had all the motives to obedience been broadly before the mind of Adam or any other sinner, and had the mind duly considered them *at the time*, he would not have sinned. But the fact is, sinners do not set what truth they know before the mind, but divert the attention and rush on to hell.

Will any one still reply that although it is true that the sinner's *wilful* inconsideration and diverting his attention lays the only foundation for the necessity of the Spirit's influences, yet, is it not His great business to remove this *ignorance* occasioned by the sinner's wilful rejection of light? What does consideration do, but to bring the sinner to a juster knowledge of himself, of God, and of his duty, and thus, by force of truth, constrain him to yield? If by ignorance be meant a wilful perverse rejection of light and knowledge, I suppose that it is this state of mind which is not merely the *cause* of his sin, but *it is his sin itself*. The Apostle views the subject in this light: in speaking of sinners, he says, "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the *ignorance* that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

It is indeed the forcing of truth upon the sinner's consideration that induces him to turn. But it is not true that he is ignorant of these truths before he thus considers them. He knows he must die—that he is a sinner—that God is right and he is wrong—that there is a heaven and a hell—but, as the prophet says, "They will not see"—and again, "My people will not consider." It is not mainly then to *instruct*, but to force the sinner to *think upon his ways*, that the Spirit employs his agency.

I have already shown why he will not be converted when truth is forced upon him in hell.

11th. But here some one may say, *Is not this exhibition of the subject inconsistent with that mystery of which Christ speaks, when he says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit?"*

Says the objector, I have been in the habit of considering the subject of a new heart, as a very mysterious one; but you make it very plain. How is this? Does not Christ, in the text I have quoted, represent it as mysterious? In answer to this I would ask, Wherein does Christ, in that text, represent the mystery of the new birth as consisting? Not in the effects which the Spirit produces, for the effects are matters of experience and observation. Not in the instrumentality used, for this is often revealed in the Bible. But the mystery lies in the manner of the Spirit's communicating with mind. How disembodied spirits communicate with each other, we are unable to say—or how a disembodied spirit can communicate with one that wears a body, we do not know. We know that we communicate with each other through the medium of our bodily senses. The particular manner in which the Spirit of God carries on his debates and strivings with the mind, is what, in this life, we shall probably never know. Nor is it important that we should. Every Christian knows that in some way the truth was kept before his mind, and made to bear, and press upon him, and hedge him in, until he was constrained to yield. These are matters of experience; but in what particular manner the Holy Spirit did this, is just as mysterious as millions of other facts, which we daily witness, but cannot explain.

12th. But here perhaps another objection may arise—*If the sinner is able to convert himself, why does he need the Spirit of God?*

Suppose a man owed you one hundred dollars, was abundantly able, but wholly unwilling to pay you; you obtain a writ, and prepare, by instituting a suit against him, to ply him with a motive that will constrain him to be honest and pay his debts. Now suppose that he should say, I am perfectly able to pay this hundred dollars, of what use then is this writ, and a sheriff, and a lawsuit? The answer is, It is to make him willing—to be sure, he is able, but he is unwilling. Just so with the sinner—he is able to do his duty, but

is unwilling, therefore the Spirit of God plies him with motives to make him willing.

13th. Again—*You see that sinners should not content themselves with praying for a new heart.*

It has been common for those who believe that sinners are *unable* to change their own heart, when sinners have inquired what they should do to be saved, to substitute another requirement for that contained in the text, and instead of commanding them to make to them a new heart, have told them to pray that God would change their heart. They have used language like the following: "You must remember that you are dependent on God for a new heart. Do not attempt to do any thing in your own strength—attend to your Bible, use the means of grace, call upon God to change your heart, and wait patiently for the answer." A few years since, a lawyer, under deep conviction of sin, came to my room to inquire what he should do to be saved. He informed me that when in college, he, with two others, were deeply anxious for their souls; that they waited on the President, and inquired what they should do. His directions were, in substance, that they should read their Bibles, keep clear of vain company, use the means of grace, and pray for a new heart, and that ere long they would either be converted, or would give up reading their Bibles and using means for their salvation. On being questioned how the matter terminated, he replied, that it turned out as the President told them it would; they soon gave up reading their Bibles, and using means. He said that the directions of the President relieved his mind, and that the more he prayed and used the means, the less distress he felt. That as he thought he was now doing his duty, and in a hopeful way, the more he read his Bible and prayed, the more acceptable he thought himself to God, and the more likely to be converted. The more diligent he was in using means, the more self-complacent and contented he became—and thus prayed and waited for God to change his heart till his convictions had entirely worn away, and with a burst of grief he added, thus it turned out with us all. The other two are confirmed drunkards, and I have well nigh ruined myself by drink. Now if there is any hope in my case, tell me what I shall do to be saved. On being told to repent, and pressed to the immediate performance of the duty, he, to all appearance, yielded up himself to God upon the spot. Now the result of the directions given by the President, was strictly philosophical. The advice was just such as would please the devil. It would answer his purpose infinitely better than to have told them to abandon all thoughts of religion at once, for this would have shocked and frightened them, and, anxious as they were, they would have turned with abhorrence from such advice; but setting them upon this sanctimonious method of praying and waiting for God to do what he required of them, was soothing to their consciences; substituting another requirement in the place of the command of God, fostering their spirit of delay, confirming them in self-righteousness, and one of two results must have been expected—either that they would embrace a *false* hope, or no hope at all. For it was perfectly natural and rea-

sonable, if this was their *duty*, to pray, and use the means, and wait for God, for them to suppose that, as they were doing what God required of them, they were growing better. That the more diligent they were in their impenitent endeavors, the more safely might they rely upon God's converting them. Therefore of course the further they proceeded in this way, the less knowledge would they have of themselves, their danger, and their deserts; and the more certainly would they grieve away the Spirit of God.

Sinner! instead of waiting and praying for God to change your heart, you should at once summon up your powers, put forth the effort, and change the governing preference of your mind. But here some one may ask, Can the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, change itself? I have already said that this text in the original reads, "The minding of the flesh is enmity against God." This minding of the flesh, then, is a choice or preference to gratify the flesh. Now it is indeed absurd to say, that a choice can change itself; but it is not absurd to say, that the agent who exercises this choice, can change it. The sinner that minds the flesh, can change his mind, and mind God.

14th. *From this subject it is manifest that the sinner's obligation to make to himself a new heart, is infinite.*

Sinner! your obligations to love God is equal to the excellence of his character, and your guilt in not obeying him is of course equal to your obligation. You cannot therefore for an hour or a moment defer obedience to the commandment in the text, without deserving eternal damnation.

15th. *You see it is most reasonable to expect sinners, if they are converted at all, to be converted under the voice of the living preacher, or while the truth is held up in all its blaze before the mind.*

An idea has prevailed in the church, that sinners must have a season of protracted conviction, and that those conversions that were sudden were of a suspicious character. But certainly "this persuasion cometh not from God." We nowhere in the Bible read of cases of lengthened conviction. Peter was not afraid on the day of Pentecost that his hearers had not conviction enough. He did not tell them to pray and labor for a more impressive sense of their guilt, and wait for the Spirit of God to change their hearts, but urged home their immediate duty upon them. If he had suffered them to escape, to go from under his voice while yet in their sins, it is probable that hundreds, if not thousands of them had not been converted at all. It is as reasonable and philosophical to expect the sinner to turn, if he does it at all, while listening to the arguments of the living preacher, as it is to expect a juror to be convinced, and make up his mind, under the arguments of the advocate. The advocate expects if they are convinced at all, that they will be so while he is addressing them. He does not act upon the absurd and preposterous supposition, that it is more likely they will be convinced and make up their verdict in his favor when they shall have retired, and calmly considered the subject. His object is so thoroughly to convince, so completely to imbue their minds with the subject, as to get their intellect, and conscience, and

heart to embrace his views of the subject. This is wise, and verily, in this respect, "the children of this world, are in their generation wiser than the children of light." And now, sinner, if you go away without making up your mind, and changing your heart, it is most probable that your mind will be diverted—you will forget many things that you have heard—many of the motives and considerations that now press upon you may be abstracted from your mind—you will lose the clear view of the subject that you now have—may grieve the Spirit, defer repentance, and push your unbroken footsteps to the gates of hell.

16th. *You see the importance of presenting those truths, and in such connections and relations, as are calculated to induce the sinner to change his heart.*

Few more mischievous sentiments have ever been broached, than that there is no philosophical connection between means and end in the conversion of sinners; that there is no natural adaptedness in the motives of the gospel to annihilate the sinner's selfishness, and lead him to submit to God. This idea is a part of the scheme of physical depravity. It considers regeneration as a change in the substance of the mind; as effected by the direct physical agency of the Spirit of God, irrespective of truth. If this were a correct view of regeneration, it would be manifest that there could be no connection between the means and the end. For if the work be a physical creation, performed by the direct and physical power of the Holy Ghost, then certainly it is effected by *no means* whatever. But so far is this from truth, that no sinner ever was or ever will be converted, but by means wisely and philosophically adapted to this end.

The Spirit selects such considerations, at such times and under such circumstances, as are naturally calculated to disarm and confound the sinner; to strip him of his excuses, answer his cavils, humble his pride, and break his heart. The preacher should therefore acquaint himself with his refuges of lies, and as far as possible take into consideration his whole history, including his present views and state of mind; should wisely select a subject; so skilfully arrange, so simply and yet so powerfully present it, as to engage the sinner's whole attention, and then lay himself out to the utmost to bring him to yield upon the spot. He who deals with souls should study well the laws of mind, and carefully and prayerfully adapt his matter and his manner to the state and circumstances, views and feelings, in which he may find the sinner at the time. He should present that particular subject, in that connection and in that manner, that shall have the greatest *natural tendency* to subdue the rebel at once. If men would act as wisely and as philosophically in attempting to make men Christians, as they do in attempting to sway mind upon other subjects; if they would suit their subject to the state of mind, conform "the action to the word and the word to the action," and press their subject with as much address, and warmth, and perseverance, as lawyers and statesmen do their addresses; the result would be the conversion of hundreds of thousands, and converts would be added to the Lord "like drops of the

morning dew." Were the whole church and the whole ministry right upon this subject; had they right views, were they imbued with a right spirit, and would they "go forth with tears, bearing precious seed, they would soon reap the harvest of the whole earth, and return bearing their sheaves with them."

The importance of rightly understanding that God converts souls by motives, is inconceivably great. Those who do not recognize this truth in their practice at least, are more likely to hinder than to aid the Spirit in his work. Some have denied this truth in theory, but have happily admitted it in practice. They have prayed, and preached, and talked, as if they expected the Holy Spirit to convert sinners by the truth. In such cases, notwithstanding their theory, their practice was owned and blessed of God. But a want of attention to this truth in practice has been the source of much and ruinous error in the management of revivals, and in dealing with anxious souls. Much of the preaching, conversation and exhortation have been irrelevant, perplexing and mystical. Sufficient pains have not been taken to avoid a diversion of public and individual attention. Sinners have been kept long under conviction, because their spiritual guides withheld those particular truths which at the time above all others they needed to know. They have been perplexed and confounded by abstract doctrines, metaphysical subtleties, absurd exhibitions of the sovereignty of God, inability, physical regeneration, and constitutional depravity, until the agonized mind, discouraged and mad with contradiction from the pulpit, and absurdity in conversation, dismissed the subject as altogether incomprehensible, and postponed the performance of duty as impossible.

17th. *From this subject you may see the importance of pressing every argument, and every consideration, that can have any weight.*

And now, sinner, while the subject is before you, will you yield? To keep yourself away from under the motives of the gospel, by neglecting church, and neglecting your Bible, will prove fatal to your soul. And to be careless when you do attend, or to hear with attention and refuse to make up your mind and yield, will be equally fatal. And now, "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you at *this time* render your body and soul, a living sacrifice to God, which is your reasonable service." Let the truth take hold upon your conscience—throw down your rebellious weapons—give up your refuges of lies—fix your mind steadfastly upon the world of considerations that should instantly decide you to close in with the offer of reconciliation while it now lies before you. Another moment's delay, and it may be too late forever.

- ✓ The Spirit of God may depart from you—the offer of life may be made no more, and this one more slighted offer of mercy may close up your account, and seal you over to all the horrors of eternal death. Hear, then, O sinner, I beseech you, and obey the word of the Lord—"Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?"

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THE NEW DIVINITY TRIED.

ABSTRACT OF THE SERMON.

EZEKIEL xviii. 31. *Make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?*

THE word *heart* has various significations in the scriptures. In a few instances it appears to be synonymous with *soul* or *spirit*; sometimes it means *the whole mind*, and sometimes *the understanding*, and sometimes *the conscience*; in some places it seems to mean *the constitutional propensities* which belong to human nature, whether holy or sinful; sometimes it seems to refer to *the social or relative affections*; often it expresses *all the affections or exercises of the mind*; and in many instances it is spoken of as *the fountain of our exercises*; as "the good man, out of the good treasure of his heart," &c. In such cases, as the heart is spoken of as the fountain of our moral exercises, it must mean *the ruling choice or governing purpose of the mind*. This I take to be the meaning of the term in all those passages where it is spoken of as comprehending the whole of divine requirement and human duty. And this is its meaning in the text; and the passage requires sinners to *change* their governing purpose, or make their leading object of life a new one, such as they have never indulged before.

I. I will show what is *not meant* by this command.

It is not intended that a sinner is to make a new *soul* or *spirit*; although the word *spirit* is employed in the text, and although even the word *heart* sometimes means the soul. Every man has just such a soul as he needs, to love and serve God; and christians did not receive any new soul when they were converted; therefore a new soul is not necessary, and is not required in the text or in the bible.

It is not intended that a sinner is to make any new *faculty* of soul or mind. He needs no new faculty; and the christian has received none, but only consecrates to God those he had from the commencement of his being.

Neither is he required to make any new moral *principle* of a permanent character; if, by principle, is meant any thing distinct from and prior to moral exercises; any thing behind the will, and necessary and giving character to volitions. It is not required to make a new *taste* or disposition; if by those terms is meant any thing distinct from and prior to moral exercises, and necessary and giving character to volitions. This would be, like the other cases mentioned, something pertaining to his nature, which is impossible. *A nature cannot be holy*. The nature of Adam at his creation was not holy. What is holiness? It is *virtue*, the moral *action* of an intelligent being, directed to a right object. It is absurd then to speak of holiness or virtue as pertaining to his nature.

II I will show what is *intended* in the command of the text. It is, that the sinner should *change the governing purpose of his life*. A man resolves to be a lawyer. Then he directs all his plans and efforts to effect that object, and passes by or resists every thing which would hinder its attainment; and that, for the time, is his governing purpose. Afterward, he may alter his determination and resolve to be a merchant. Now he directs all his efforts to *that* object, and so has changed his heart, or governing purpose, in regard to his secular affairs. Sinners, in like manner, have made it their governing purpose to seek their own interest or happiness, and have lived without God in the world. They are required to turn about, and choose the service of God: and when they do so, they make themselves new hearts in the sense intended in the scriptures. God is infinitely holy; not because his nature is holy, but because his governing purpose is infinitely holy or virtuous. He is immutably holy because his holy governing purpose is infinitely strong. He also knows all things from eternity. He can therefore have no new ideas, and consequently no new motive; from which it follows, that he can never be induced to change his governing purpose. Adam was made with a nature neither sinful nor holy. When he began to act, he made it his governing purpose to serve God. He was afterwards induced to change his purpose, through the suggestions of satan, who told him he would become like God. Wishing to enjoy that distinction, he chose to gratify himself; and in doing this he transgressed a divine command, and became a selfish being or a sinner. Thus we easily solve those knotty questions which have long puzzled theologians—"How could Adam, being holy, become a sinner? How could sin enter the universe, in heaven, or on earth, when God made all rational creatures in his own likeness?"

Adam changed his heart, or governing purpose, from good to evil. Now suppose that God, when he came to reprove him for his transgression, had bid him repent and make him a new heart, and Adam should say, "I cannot make a new heart." God might reply, "Why not? You have just done it. You have changed your heart, or governing purpose, from my service to your own selfish objects. Now change it back again and turn to me."

Our not varying from a governing purpose depends on the strength and permanency of that purpose. Angels do not transgress and revolt, because of the amazing *strength* of their purpose to love and serve God. The new purpose of the young convert is a governing purpose, but feeble. He would soon be perfect, if he adhered to his purpose fully, and went on decidedly in the christian life. But though he never *gives up* his governing purpose, he pursues it inconstantly; and this accounts for the instability of christians.

It is apparent that the change now described, effected by the simple volition of the sinner through the influence of motives, is a *sufficient* change; all that the bible requires. It is all that is *necessary* to make a sinner a christian. It is, moreover, all the change that can possibly have a moral character. I grant it is very different from the change which sinners have been accustomed to expect, according to the instructions they have received. They have waited in perfect stillness, forgetting that they are required to change their own hearts, and expecting God to come suddenly and perform some wonderful work upon their souls, like the man who is going to take for the first time an electric shock. He takes hold of the chain, and waits trembling for a sudden and indescribable shock, to affect him he knows not how. A sinner may wait thus till doom's day, and never be converted. The sentiment that teaches this waiting, is calculated to send souls to death and hell.

III. This is a *reasonable* command.

1. Because it *requires man to use his powers in a reasonable manner*. If it is right for God to require men to obey, then it is right he should require them to *purpose* it.

2. Because men *actually have the control* of their mental and moral powers.

3. Because they are *constantly in the habit* of controlling their powers, and of changing their purposes, by the influence of motives. About secular affairs, they change their purposes and designs every day. And it is strange, that when the motives for a change are infinite, they should have no power to make it.

4. Because it is *as easy to purpose right, as to purpose wrong*; and one would think, infinitely more so. How comes it then, that men cannot purpose right? The fact is, it would be infinitely impossible not to do it, if men did not *resist* all the infinite motives to purpose right.

5. Because *it is indispensable to their good*; it is only, in other words, commanding them to be happy.

REMARKS.

1. As Adam did, so have all sinners made themselves wicked hearts, without the concurrence of a divine influence. Children, when they begin to act, make their hearts wicked, by setting out with a purpose of self-gratification. Seeking their own happiness, they soon violate the commands of God and become sinful.

2. The idea of a sinner's being passive in regeneration, is calculated to destroy souls. It involves the absurdity of his having a passive volition.

3. Every impenitent sinner is infinitely guilty, for not making himself a new heart;—for not going the whole length of performing the work himself.

4. To say "I can't love God and repent," is to plead one sin for the commission of another.

5. This view illustrates the nature of the sinner's dependence on the Spirit of God. The only necessity for his aid or influence, lies in the sinner's *pertinacious obstinacy*; and when he converts the sinner, he only overcomes that obstinacy.

6. The Spirit uses means in producing conversion. He does not come and take right hold of the heart and perform an operation upon it; but he presents motives by means of the truth; he persuades, and the sinner yields to his persuasion. Many have supposed that he moves, by a direct and immediate act, either upon the *motive* to give it efficiency, or upon the *mind* to make it willing. But there is no mystery about it. Every christian *knows* how he was induced to change his governing purpose or his heart. He was convinced and persuaded, and freely gave his own heart to God without compulsion. And I know not which is the greater infidel, he that denies the agency of the Spirit in conversion; or he that believes God has provided means which are not adapted to the end for which they are employed.

7. There is a sense in which a sinner does make a new heart. There is also a sense in which God does it; another, in which a preacher does it; and another, in which the truth or the word of God does it. The bible employs expressions regarding conversion, in these four different ways. It is ascribed to the subject, the sinner himself; he changes his own heart. It is ascribed to the instrument, or the preacher; he converts sinners and saves souls from death. It is ascribed to the means, or the word; men are begotten by the word of truth. It is ascribed to God, or the Spirit; they are born again by the Spirit. A person is walking near Niagara Falls, and sees a man approaching from the opposite direction towards the precipice, who seems to be lost in a reverie. He is advancing directly to the verge of the precipice, unconscious of danger, and heedless of his footsteps. He has just raised his foot to step off, when the other spies his danger and cries out, *Stop!* He is roused, turns at the critical moment and is saved. People gather round, and the rescued man in great agitation relates the occurrence. "*That man,*" says he, "*has saved my life.*" "But how?" "O he called to me at the very moment I was stepping off, and *that word, stop,* snatched me from destruction. *O if I had not turned that instant,* I should have been dashed to pieces. *O it was the mercy of God that kept me from a horrid death.*" This illustrates the use of those four kinds of expression in the bible, in reference to the conversion of a sinner, with one exception. In the case supposed, there was only the voice of the man who gave the alarm; but in conversion, there is both the voice of the preacher, and the voice of the Spirit; the preacher cries, "*Stop,*" and the Spirit cries, "*Stop,*" also.

8. If sinners will not yield to truth, they will inevitably be lost.

9. We see the consistency of using means for the conversion of sinners.

10. It is more probable that sinners will be converted under the voice of the living minister, than afterwards. Some have supposed it will hardly do to urge sinners to repent right on the spot, lest they should some how get a false hope. Better to exhibit the truth, and let them go home to reflect and pray, and there give their hearts to God more deliberately. But how does the lawyer do, when he resolves to change the hearts of the jury and gain his cause? Does he say, I will make a speech of half an hour or three quarters, state the law, and the facts, and the arguments, and dismiss them to their room for calm deliberation? No; he plies all his efforts to change their hearts while he is speaking; and so should ministers, when pleading with sinners.

11. When ministers do not understand this subject, they use means for the conversion of sinners to little or no purpose.

12. If you are expecting any other agency than that which accompanies the means, you will wait in vain.

13. As you are able to change your own hearts, the great point of responsibility lies right there. To change your own hearts will save you; nothing else can; and on that point is suspended your eternal destiny.

STRICTURES.

PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS.

The most prominent views in mental philosophy, presented in this discourse, are these: *that a moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone, and a nature cannot be either holy or unholy;—that the heart, when considered in relation to God, is nothing but the governing purpose of the man;—that the depravity or moral ruin of man has not abridged his power of choosing right, with the same ease that he chooses wrong;—and that conversion is effected only by moral suasion, or the influence of motives.* All these propositions seem to depend partly on the definition of the word *heart*; and it may therefore be profitable to spend some short time in ascertaining what the heart is.

The heart, in the physical constitution, is the organ from which the blood is propelled throughout the system, and is therefore *the source or fountain of animal life*. So in the mental or spiritual constitution, *the heart is the source of all the affections, emotions or desires*. Whether these operations of the mind belong to *the will*, or to a *distinct faculty* termed *the heart*, is not agreed; and perhaps the distinction is not very important, if we do not lose sight of the operations themselves or of their character. It cannot be doubted that there is such a class of exercises; that they pertain to the *mind*, or to the *man*; that they are not purely of the animal nature, though many of them are modified by the connection of spirit with matter; that they are constantly springing up within us, and constitute a large portion of the exercises put forth by the ever busy soul. We are conscious that these affections and desires are antecedent to the determinations of the will, and that they operate powerfully as motives to fix our choice or decide our volitions, in view of the objects which are presented to the mind, and which excite feelings or affections. The advocates of the "*Taste Scheme*" ascribe the feelings or affections to a distinct faculty, which they denominate *the taste* or the *heart*. The friends of the "*Exercise Scheme*" arrange both feelings and volitions in one class, under the general name of *exercises*, and ascribe both to the same faculty, the *will*. Both sects agree, however, that feelings or affections exist, and that they are in some sense distinct from volitions. They agree also in the free use of

the scriptural term *heart*, as the source or fountain of feeling. The preacher's sentiment seems to be at war with them both. He applies the term *heart*, when considered as accountable to God, not only to *exercises*, but to *volitions* exclusively; yea, he confines it to a *single* volition; to that volition by which a man determines on his "governing purpose." That volition is his heart, and he has no other till he changes his mind and resolves on another governing purpose; then he has another heart, constituted simply by his new volition.

This definition is at variance with the preacher's own statements in the introduction to his sermon, where he said, "The heart in many instances [in the scriptures] is spoken of as the fountain of our exercises," where "it must mean *the ruling choice or governing purpose of the mind*." This I take to be the meaning of the term in all those passages where it is spoken of as comprehending the whole of divine requirement and human duty." Conceding to him that the term heart is sometimes synonymous with the term *soul* or *spirit*, or *the whole mind*, or *understanding*, or *conscience*, or *the constitutional propensities*, we come directly to those numerous instances where it means, according to his own statement, what *comprehends the whole of divine requirement and human duty*." He would include in this class, those "many instances" where "it is spoken of as the fountain of our moral exercises." We should include in the same class those expressions, where the term is put for "*the social or relative affections*," so far as those affections have a moral character; for certainly the law which requires us to love God, requires us to love our brother also. We should also include those instances, where the word "expresses *all the affections or exercises of our minds*;" for surely among them "all," there must be many which are comprehended in the "divine requirement" or prohibition, and which pertain to "human duty" or transgression. But we will consent to take only the single explanation of the preacher, on which he grounds his running definition of the word heart, that is to say, "when it is spoken of as *the fountain of our moral exercises*." He says, "In such cases it must mean *the ruling choice or governing purpose of the mind*." We say, that such a choice or purpose constitutes but an exceedingly small portion of any man's "*moral exercises*" from day to day;—and here we are at issue with the preacher. We hold, that the ruling affection of a man, not his "ruling choice or governing purpose," gives a character to his other "moral exercises," either sinful or holy; and that the "governing purpose" or resolution will be conformed to his ruling affection. But, to say that his ruling choice, or purpose, or even affection, is *the heart itself*, in our apprehension, is putting a very small part for the immense whole. We believe, that where such a ruling exercise comes into being once, especially in the instance of a secure sinner, there are at least a million of subordinate exercises, which equally belong to the heart—which are comprehended in "*divine requirement and human duty*"—which are registered in the book of remembrance—of which man must give account in the judgment—and which, together with his ruling passion and governing purpose, go to make up his whole moral character in the sight of God. These innumerable exercises surely should be embraced in the definition of a term, which, to use the preacher's own phraseology, designates "*the fountain of our moral exercises*." We should define the term thus: The heart is the fountain or source of all the moral affections or feelings. And all the volitions of a man correspond with his feelings and affections. ||

Let us employ the definition given by the preacher, instead of the term *heart*, in a few quotations from the scriptures. This is a fair and conclusive method of testing its correctness. If the quotations make good sense, let us adopt the definition: if not, let us look for one better. "O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding governing purpose. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken governing purpose; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. This people's governing purpose is waxed gross, . . . lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their governing purpose, and should be converted, and I should heal them. The whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to governing purpose. The governing purpose of her husband doth safely trust in her. He is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the governing purpose, in the spirit, and not in the letter. Out of the governing purpose proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies. [These come from the subordinate wicked affections of the unrenewed man; but not one in a thousand adopts them in his "governing purpose" through his whole life.] He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of governing purpose, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. [Was the governing purpose of the apostles a wicked one? Were they unconverted men?] Now when they heard this, they were pricked [or wounded] in their governing purpose, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Ye are the epistle of Christ, . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the governing purpose. Daniel purposed in his governing purpose that he would not defile himself. Every man, according as he purposeth in his governing purpose, so let him give. Barnabas exhorted them all that with purpose of governing purpose they would cleave unto the Lord. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy governing purpose. Why hath satan filled thy governing purpose to lie to the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy governing purpose? But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his governing purpose was lifted up; . . . nevertheless Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his governing purpose; . . . and God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his governing purpose, [a very small portion of his inner man.] Thou hast put gladness in my governing purpose. The troubles of my governing purpose are enlarged. My governing purpose shall not fear, though war shall rise up against me. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my governing purpose is overwhelmed." It is abundantly manifest that by this definition the sense of the sacred writers would be strangely altered, and the very *heart* of the bible taken away. Substitute "fountain [or source] of the moral affections," instead of "governing purpose," and the sense remains good, although the original word "heart" makes better phraseology.

The heart, therefore, is something far more extensive than a ruling purpose, and comprehends all the moral affections or feelings of the soul. Love to kindred, love to the world, love to christians, love to God, are predicated of the heart, rather than of the will when considered separate from the heart. We love an object, not so much because we *resolve* to love it, as because it is congenial with our heart or affections. We hate those things which are disagreeable, even when we resolve to overcome our aversion. This propensity of our minds to

exercise some kind of feelings in view of objects, is universal among men, is developed in early infancy, and is in constant operation. Whether it be part of our *nature* or not, we shall not dispute; but it is inseparable from it, and with it enters and leaves the world.

Are the exercises of the heart, when they do not partake of the decisive character of volitions, of a *moral* kind? Are we answerable for them in view of law? Certainly; for the law of God requires holy affections and feelings, not less than virtuous volitions and right actions. Nay, it begins with the affections, both towards God and man, and lays its highest claims upon the heart. Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul; which the angels doubtless do, on the simple discovery of his glory, without the formality of *resolving* or *willing* to do it. The same is true of christians. That love is not for a moment inoperative or dead. It produces holy volitions in quick succession, and flows out in acts of new obedience. "Sin," it is often said, "is the transgression of the law; and there is no sin except in a voluntary act." But is there not sin in the exercise of unholy affections, and the emotions of that carnal mind which is enmity against God? Paul condemned and loathed himself for that law in his members, which warred against the law of his mind, so that he could not do the good which he desired. Therefore, whether our very nature is corrupt or not, it is manifest that innumerable feelings are unholy, which never take on themselves the character of deliberate volitions.

The propensity to indulge evil affections is very early discovered in children, and the bible says they go astray as soon as they are born. For ourselves, we hold that the children of degenerate parents are degenerate also; and prepared to act wrong as soon as they are capable of action. To say that the nature of God is not holy, and that Adam was not created in the holy moral image of God, seems to us an arrogant assumption of knowledge. Hast thou seen God at any time, and soared beyond the display of his attributes and the revelation of his counsels, into the ineffable secrets of his eternal nature? When he laid the foundations of the earth and formed man upon it, and made him a living soul, *vast thou there?* Dost thou know that Adam had no moral direction given to his primeval powers, which insured his love and obedience to his Creator, when he saw his glory and began "to will and to do?" We must still believe that "God made man upright," though he soon revolted. It is easy to adopt metaphysical principles and distinctions that will justify the most absurd and monstrous conclusions; and we ought not to forget, that in this way infidels and errorists have undermined the government of God, and explained virtue and vice out of the universe. Under the head of Theology, we shall consider whether this new scheme accounts better than the old for the fall of Adam, for the universal and early depravity of his descendants, for the exercise of the freedom of choice in sinners, and for the interposition of the divine Spirit in their conversion. We think it is made sufficiently apparent, that the new definition of the term *heart* is essentially defective; that the law takes cognizance of those *feelings* which are of a moral nature, independently of overt and determinate acts of the will; and that the talk about moral *nature* is about things beyond human ken. The other philosophical distinctions will be more appropriately considered in other connections.

THEOLOGICAL VIEWS.

It is an axiom with us, that every man is perfectly culpable and inexcusable for the alienation of his affections from God, *however* that alienation may have originated. God, reason and conscience charge home the guilt of this alienation upon us, as a thing *in itself* sinful, irrespective of its derivation from Adam, of its early exercise in our infancy, and of the way and manner of removing it. Under the light of the divine law, this guilt is matter of consciousness to every man, woman and child. We feel that we *ought* to love God with all the heart, but do not; and when the mind is unsophisticated by theories, we feel as really guilty for indulging vile *affections*, as we do for making deliberate *resolutions*, or performing wicked outward actions. Here then we take our stand, supported by conscience, and the word of God, and the universal acknowledgments of unsanctified men as well as christians.

On this ground we say, that we perfectly accord with many things in this sermon, which are forcibly exhibited. Man is under infinite obligations to *desist* from this rebellion; to change his affections; to love God supremely; to mourn for sin with godly sorrow; to "believe with the heart" on the Lord Jesus Christ, or with that "faith that worketh by love;" and to make it his "governing purpose" to glorify God in his body and his spirit all the days of his life, not because it is for "his own good," or will "make him happy," but because it is right, and God has infinite claims upon him. He ought to do this immediately, on the first annunciation of the gospel in his ears; and is utterly without excuse for delaying it a single moment, under any pretence of inability, or indisposition, or dependence on divine agency, or mercy, or sovereignty. He ought to do it, "because he has the control of his powers on other subjects," and is "in the habit of exercising it;" and because he has all the powers that are necessary for *this* great purpose, *if he will use them*; and if he will *not*, that unwillingness is not his *excuse* but his *greater sin*. Adam ought to have done it, the moment God reproved him for his revolt; and he had *power, if he would use it*. We believe farther, that when sinners *are* converted, it is through the exercise of their own powers, by the agency of the Spirit, and by the application of truth through the ministry of reconciliation. We can therefore fully accord with most of the "Remarks" made in the concluding part of the above sermon. "Every sinner is infinitely guilty for not making himself a new heart; to say 'I can't love God and repent,' is to plead one sin for the commission of another; the only necessity for the aid of the Spirit arises from the sinner's 'pertinacious obstinacy,' [that obstinacy growing out of a hard and impenitent heart, fully set in him to do evil;] the Spirit [in some way] uses means in producing conversion; there is a sense in which a penitent sinner does make a new heart; if sinners will not yield to truth, they will inevitably perish, [and they will not yield to truth alone, because their carnal mind is enmity against God;] we see the consistency of using means to convert sinners; it is more probable that they will be converted under the voice of the living minister, than after they have retired, refusing to yield; if they are expecting any other agency than that which now operates, [while they do not 'rend their hearts' in penitence] they will [probably] wait in vain, [for their waiting is certainly wicked;] and to submit right to God at once is the great point of their responsibility." These positions are sustained on *our* scheme, as well as on that of the

sermon, and far more consistently with bible truth. From other "remarks" we shall have occasion to dissent.

The grand defect of this sermon, in our apprehension, is this: that it presents a very inadequate notion of the moral depravity of revolted man. We believe that when he rebelled against God, he brought himself under bondage to sin, as well as under the condemnation of the law. Consequently, there was a necessity for both parts of that salvation which the bible reveals; of a Mediator, to "redeem him from the curse of the law" by being "made a curse for him," and of a Sanctifier, "to deliver him from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The fact is, all the preacher has said of the freedom and power of man is perfectly true, when applied to man *as God made him*. But it is quite another thing to speak of man in a state of revolt and moral ruin. When he revolted, he came under bondage to sin and satan: that is, to his own heart's lusts, urged on by the temptations of the deceiver. He is now "carnal and sold under sin." He has yielded his soul and his members as servants to unrighteousness, and its servant he is. He is a "servant of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." He is a "servant of sin unto death." He is a "servant of sin," and the grace of God alone can "make him free from sin," so that he will "become a servant to God," having his "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." He is a voluntary servant, it is true; for he does not break his bonds, but loves and resolves to serve sin; and his "iniquities take him away" continually, against the remonstrances of conscience and the warnings and entreaties of the gospel. He is "carnal, sold under sin," so that even when sanctified in part, and "delighting in the law of God after the inner man," still he "cannot do the things that he would." "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me," says Jehovah, "is thy help." "When the son of man shall make him free, he shall be free indeed." When he is "born of the Spirit," then is he "a new creature," and will use his powers to will and do that which is pleasing to God. Antecedently to this change, he *may* and *can* do all that God requires, but *will* not, because his "carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Call it what we will, there is in revolted man a "desperately wicked heart," which does not and will not yield to Christ, till God "takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh." Then is the sinner instantly willing in the day of Christ's power, and cheerfully employs his powers in his service, repenting, believing, loving and obeying.

The depravity of man reduces him to a bondage or inability exclusively *moral*. He *can* turn to God, but *will* not; and that perverse *will*, controlled by a *wicked heart* or *vile affections*, is so strong, that he is lost forever if the special grace of God do not interpose. He has all necessary or conceivable power to do right, if he had a heart to it. Having no heart to it, he is without excuse for his "pertinacious obstinacy;" and it is infinitely right for God to require him to repent, and to condemn him for his aggravated sin if he does not. He is required "to use his powers in the most reasonable manner;" but he is a most unreasonable being, and *will* not so use his powers in turning to God till God turns him. He "has the control of his powers" for this purpose, *if he will*, as fully as in "changing his purpose about worldly affairs where he is in the habit of controlling them;" but the mischief is, he *will not*, for his heart is polluted, enslaved and hardened. He changes his purpose

des easily on other subjects; and "it is strange, that when the motives are infinite he should have no power." Yes, infinitely strange, and astonishing to heaven and earth; but no longer wonderful, when we remember the awful depravity of his heart. "It is certainly as easy to purpose right as wrong;" most certainly as easy for a holy being, who is *inclined* only to holy purposes; but is it as easy for one who is "dead in trespasses and sins," "every imagination of the thought of whose heart is only evil continually?" Did Paul find it as easy, even long after he was born again? Do sinners find it as easy when they try? Why then do they "resist all the infinite motives to purpose right?" Why do they, from the rising of the sun to his going down, turn away from God and rush upon destruction, till God arrests them by his grace? Why did not one sinner ever have mercy upon his own soul, till God stretched out his almighty arm, and drew him from the horrible pit? If Adam had been immediately commanded to repent, he would have been without excuse for disobeying; but being under the dominion of sin, it was not easy to do it, because he would not purpose to do it.

It will be agreed that all the depravity of a sinner lies in his heart, or heart and will. By the principles of this sermon, the "governing purpose" includes both, and of course contains all the depravity of man. What then becomes of all those "vile affections," whose name is legion, which are entirely separate from that purpose? What becomes of those millions of *subordinate* and *separate* purposes which every man is conscious of forming every day he lives? What becomes of that "body of death," under which every christian "groans being burdened," and which subjects him to a dreadful conflict from his conversion to his removal to glory? Are these to be *included* in the "governing purpose" or heart? The preacher does not include, but altogether *excludes* them. The heart, or the moral character of man, is the governing purpose, simply and exclusively. The unavoidable inference is, either that this definition of *heart* is radically deficient; or that there is in every man an immense ocean of moral depravity, every notice of which the preacher would exclude from his creed and his bible. It is not for us to select his alternative.

DIFFICULTIES AND INCONSISTENCIES EXPOSED.

This sermon proposes to make every thing plain, "even the deep things of God," both to saints and sinners. It would make the things of the Spirit intelligible to the carnal mind, and the road to conversion as evident as the most familiar affairs of this life. But it shares the common fate of those productions, which would be wise above what is written.

The preacher discourses wisely about a *holy nature*; but he has not shown *why* there may not be a moral nature, as well as an *animal* or *intellectual*; or proved that holiness cannot pertain in some sense to the nature of the soul, and yet the soul be a free moral agent. If the law did not extend to the affections, and there were no virtue in love, the reasoning would be more conclusive. Supposing Adam to have been made a *neutral* being, he has not shown how it *happened* that his first actions were holy and not selfish.

On his own principles, he has not accounted for the fall of man and the introduction of sin, better than those who preceded him. Adam was holy when the tempter came to him. The tempter appealed to his "*ambition*." How could that motive influence a holy mind? 'O, Adam was as free to choose good as evil, and had full command of his

powers, and was influenced only by motives.' True, on *any* scheme he was so. But how was it possible that such a wicked motive could influence a holy mind? and where did his "ambition" come from? The old difficulty still remains. The Gordian knot is yet untied.

We have seen already, that he has made off strangely with the doctrine of entire depravity; reducing it to a trifling matter, seated only in the "governing purpose," and put off as easily as persons change their plans of business.

The preacher totally discards the doctrine of "original sin," or transmitted pollution, and yet totally fails to account in any other way for the admitted fact, that in every age children take the course of rebellion. This task he has not attempted; but we feel authorized to demand it, before we renounce our faith. Why is it then, if there is no inclination to evil in human nature, that *all* children become early depraved? Are they not free to choose the right way? Are not the motives to holiness infinitely stronger than the opposite? 'But they set out to seek their own happiness, and so are soon induced to transgress.' Yes; but to seek their own happiness is *in itself* innocent; how then do they become wickedly *selfish*? We still say, give us light in this matter. We can agree to speculate about theories, but what shall we do with stubborn facts?

On the principles of this sermon, there can be no true conversion. Conversion is simply an act of his own will, without an antecedent or even simultaneous change of affections, to which the sinner is induced by motives alone. He renounces the world and chooses the service of God. Before he does this, and *when* he does it, he is supremely and only selfish. His motives or inducements, therefore, are entirely selfish. He does not choose God because he loves him as a holy Being; for such a motive could not possibly move a selfish man. It follows, that his changing his governing purpose does not reconcile him to God, or make him a new creature. Or, if it be said, that this is all the change that is "necessary," and that the person who makes it is a christian; then we say, he is a *selfish* christian, and yet in his sins, with the super-added danger of indulging a false and fatal hope.

This scheme takes away the doctrine of christian perseverance, and is therefore inconsistent with other sentiments of the same preacher. The sinner converts himself very easily, by a simple act of his own will; and his perseverance in the purpose then formed, "depends on the strength and permanency of that purpose;"—an evident truism, to be sure, but a poor consolation to one who "knows the depths of satan," and the more dangerous obliquities of his own heart. That which is easily obtained, is easily lost. If, as we believe, conversion on this principle will be spurious, it must fail of course. But suppose it is genuine, it is made to rest on the "will of man," and not on the promise and upholding grace of God—not on the intercession of Christ that his faith fail not, or on that Spirit which is to be in him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Give us the refuge of those, who "are confident that he who hath begun a good work in them, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Leave us not to the certainty of failure, which must be the lot of those who are "left to the freedom of their own will."

The essence of true religion is woefully obscured by the sentiments here advanced. The bible makes it consist in disinterested love to God and man. This doctrine gives it the character of self-interest. This appears from what is above said of a sinner's self-conversion, and

from one of the preacher's reasons for complying with the command of his text. *Omitting* gospel motives, he says, "To obey this command is indispensable to their own good; it is only, in other words, commanding them to be happy."

The illustration of the four methods of speaking of conversion, drawn from the supposed incidents at Niagara Falls, was calculated to make an impression upon the mind of a sinner, that the agency of the Spirit in conversion is a small matter. The agency of the man who "stopped," and of the man who alarmed him, as well as the instrumentality of the "word" which was so effectual, do well illustrate the corresponding agency and instrumentality in the conversion of a sinner. The impression was left, also, that the interposition of the "mercy of God" in the case was nearly analogous to that which converts a sinner; which we must say is far from a scriptural view of the subject. It was only the upholding and over ruling *providence* of God, which saved the man from a horrible death; and if the parallelism be perfect, his agency in conversion must be confined to the providing of means and instruments, and presenting both to the mind in the ordinary way. And the "exception" made with regard to the parallelism in this particular, does not by any means present the subject in its true light. "There is both the voice of the preacher, and the voice of the Spirit; the preacher cries, stop, and the Spirit cries, stop, also." But our grand difficulty still remains;—that if the Spirit *only* cries to the sinner, stop, and does not *stop* him, he will go on to destruction. If the Spirit *only* warns, alarms and persuades, the awakened sinner is gone forever. Such are our views of that carnal mind which is enmity against God.

The preacher held up to ridicule some sentiments of his orthodox brethren, by presenting *caricatures* instead of real pictures. Of this course we have nothing to say, except that we pray he may have a large increase of the christian spirit.

The special agency of the Spirit in conversion, yet remains to be considered. But we will now submit the matter to the candid inquirer, whether this new scheme really removes any difficulty which may have embarrassed the doctrines of grace—whether it is any more consistent than old fashioned principles are, with the language and plain meaning of the bible—whether it better accords with obvious fact and christian experience—whether it differs materially from the Arminian or Wesleyan system—and whether it does not involve inconsistencies and variations from evangelical doctrine, sufficient to entitle it to rejection.

THE AGENCY OF THE SPIRIT IN CONVERSION.

All evangelical christians are believers in the new birth, and they generally agree in the following points:

That all men are entirely depraved in the moral temper of their hearts, having not the love of God in them, in the least degree; but rather that carnal mind which is enmity against God, which is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; which sees not the loathsomeness of sin, and which discovers no beauty in the Saviour that he should be desired.

That they must experience an essential or radical moral change of heart, in order to become christians, be benefited by the atonement and intercession of Christ, and see God in peace at last.

That this moral change is wrought, in some high and important sense, by the special agency of the Spirit of God.

That the operations of the Spirit in producing this change, are inaudible, invisible, and entirely imperceptible, both to the subject of them and to others; and that they are discoverable only by their effects or fruits.

That, in effecting this change, the Spirit does not infringe, destroy, suspend, or counteract the powers of the soul, of the uncontrolled operation of which both saints and sinners are conscious.

That till the instant of his surrender, the sinner is perfectly accountable for all his unholy acts, and of course for his resisting the Saviour's entreaties and the Spirit's strivings; and if he never submits, will justly suffer for the accumulated guilt of rejecting all the efforts of mercy which have been put forth to save him.

That the instant a sinner is converted, whatever may have been the kind, or the degree, or the manner of the divine agency that converts him, he repents, or believes, or loves God, or puts forth some other holy affection or volition; and he does this as freely, as willingly, as heartily, as he ever gave his heart to sin or the world in his unregenerate state; the acts of new obedience are as really his own, as if there were no Holy Ghost, and he had put them forth in the same manner, uninfluenced from above.

That the Spirit usually employs evangelical truth, as a means or instrument of effecting this change, by applying it to the mind and the heart of the sinner; whether it come to him by reading the bible, by hearing a minister of the gospel, by listening to the admonitions of christians and the silent eloquence of their holy lives, or by the direct monition of the Spirit recalling it to his remembrance.

That the change from darkness to light and from sin to God, whatever preparatory or preceding work may have been wrought, is instantaneous; so that no iota of time passes, perceptible by a finite mind, in which the person is neither a friend nor an enemy of God. Dying *before* that instant, he would be lost, though he might have had as powerful *convictions* here as he will have in hell; dying or living, *after* or *at* the instant of his conversion, he is saved, as truly and as certainly as the oldest and most eminent believer. There is then a difference, wide as eternity, between conviction and conversion; between the *effects* at least of those influences of the Spirit which *precede* conversion and those which actually *effect* it.

Perhaps there is a general agreement on some other points; but these may be sufficient for our present purpose. *These*, we suppose, are not disputed by evangelical christians. If they are, we are prepared to sustain them. Now, therefore, we come to points of difference. We cannot go over the whole ground; but will confine ourselves more particularly to those views which are somewhat prevalent in orthodox congregations at the present time, and which we believe to be unscriptural and dangerous. They are those for substance that were advanced in the sermon, which has already received so much notice in our pages the present month.

It is said, then, that a sinner must be *active* in conversion, and change his governing purpose by his own act; for we cannot conceive of either sin or holiness which does not consist in voluntary action. Also, that the old doctrine (which will be advanced in this article) represents him as *passive*, and justifies him in *waiting* till God comes and takes right hold of his heart to perform an operation upon it. In reply, we say, as to the matter of *passiveness* we neither affirm nor deny; for we know nothing about it. But we will tell what we do believe, if we may be allowed to include in the actions of the man the *affections* of the heart, as well as the decisive and determinate volitions of the will. We believe then, that the sinner is active in his rebellion till the indivisible *instant* of his conversion. That he desists from his rebellion to wait for God, we never said, and never believed. If we saw him attempting it, we would exert our feeble powers to drive him from the lying refuge, as earnestly as the stoutest advocate of free-will that ever preached. We believe also, that the instant *after* conversion, or if you please *at* the instant, holy exercises of penitence, or love, or faith spring up in the new born soul, and very soon, perhaps immediately, determinate holy volitions also. So far we certainly agree with those, who affirm the *activity* of the mind in regeneration. But neither they nor we consider this as settling the main point. He was active in his sin; he

is active in his faith and new obedience. But was he active, and voluntary, and influenced by his own motives merely, in effecting that instantaneous change? *What was it*, that took away the heart of stone, and gave a heart of flesh, and changed enmity to love? Was it the will of the flesh, the volition of the carnal mind, which can never be subject to God? Was he in any sense born of blood, or of the will of man; or was he born of God? It was the love of God, shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost; and there it lives. We must admit here, that the sinner was the subject of an influence that moved him towards God, and that he moved himself; and that by the grace of God he is what he is now. But the grace or divine influence was *first in order*. On any hypothesis, he was a *recipient* of a divine influence, without which he would never have become holy, and which God bestowed according to the good pleasure of his own will. Whether he were *active* or *passive* in receiving it, when it came suddenly as the lightning of heaven, we neither know nor care to know. We are also incredulous as to the knowledge of others, and wish we could see them as willing to leave it with him, who directs the winds of heaven, and the quickening breath of the Lord.

We are not anxious to retain the terms, *irresistible grace*. The sinner would resist the converting influence if he could; for he always did, and it is not in his carnal mind, while it remains in him, to do otherwise. When the carnal mind is *gone*, he no longer desires to resist. But the influence that takes it away, is the very influence of which we speak. It must therefore be the mighty and transforming grace of God, which can new-create and sanctify the moral temper of the soul. It must also be an act of sovereign mercy; for surely God is under no obligation to draw with the cords of love, *him* who is rebelling and vexing his Holy Spirit, even when he sees that he is justly condemned and nigh unto destruction.

But it is said, 'Men have the power of changing their own hearts, or, in other words, of choosing and resolving to act for God; and, though they refuse with "pertinacious obduracy," yet they require only the presentation of truth, by the Spirit of God, to make them willing. The sole office of the Spirit is to convince and persuade. His influence is precisely of the same kind with the preacher's; only he brings all the motives of the gospel to a single point, and urges them home at one time; whereas the influence of the preacher is more limited in the number and weight of motives, and scattered over different periods of time. Still his power or grace is exerted in no other way; and every man who becomes a christian, is converted through moral suasion by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit *persuades* only; the sinner is convinced and yields to the persuasion. He resolves to serve God, and is a christian.'

Preachers and writers who advance these views, *seem* to believe that man has a "self-determining power;" that is, a power to resolve and act independently of motives, against their strongest bias, and merely because they *will* to decide in some way. 'No, they tell us, sinners change their hearts in view of *motives*—of motives contained in the gospel, preached and applied by ministers, and urged home by the Spirit in a way of persuasion only.' Suppose it be so, then the new creature so formed is a selfish being still; a selfish christian; a christian whose governing purpose is selfishness, and who must of consequence be still dead in trespasses and sins. If *this* is the religion which the new kind of conversion is to produce, it will be like the morning cloud and the early dew, which soon disappear. And indeed the motives which are principally urged in connection with the doctrine, are but too consonant with it. Preachers seem to be conscious that on their principles, selfish considerations alone can affect and convert their hearers; so they mostly appeal to selfish motives, to the simple desire for *happiness*. But we look to *fruit*, which such seed will produce; and we find that "that which is born of the flesh, is *flesh*" still. This argument is surely enough to convince us that the principle is wrong; that the scriptures do not authorise us to cry peace to a man, who for his *own selfish purposes* resolves, to serve God. It is not sufficient, that a sinner on the whole makes up his mind to be religious, or act for God. He must do it with good understanding, and be influenced by *love*; but a selfish heart never exercises holy love. It is said, "But it may *change* itself, and put away enmity for love?" Then we ask in reply, Will satan cast out satan? Will a wicked heart make *itself* humble, and penitent, and believing?

It is necessary that the *affections* themselves be sanctified, or the *volitions*, which are always influenced by the affections, will not be truly directed to the service of God. How can a holy *resolution* to serve God be formed, while there are none but unholy *affections* to control the will? A change of character *originates* in a change of the affections or heart. It is easy to resolve right, when the *heart* is first given to him in holy love. The question is, what can sanctify a wicked heart, which *ought* to love God, but *does* not, and is sold under sin.

Great confusion of ideas prevails on this subject, from using the word *power* in different senses. Sinners certainly have all the powers of mind which are needful to obey every command of God; but they have "no *heart*" to it, and therefore *will not*. To say they have *moral* ability to use their powers right, is to say they have good hearts already, and are not depraved. The *want* of a right heart is all the obstacle in their way. That difficulty is their sin; and the more hard and rebellious it is, the greater is their guilt. Nor is God under the least obligation to remove any difficulty of this kind, or to provide them with such a power. Yet, if he do not interpose, in the riches of his grace, they will perish by their own act.

Will sinners say, they can therefore do nothing till God renovates them, and they must *wait* till he does? That is a *wicked inference*, which they draw from the doctrine of his grace, from which they should and must be driven. But how is that object best accomplished? Can it be done by encouraging them to do the best they can with wicked hearts, and resolve by selfish motives to serve God? Or rather, by urging home a conviction of the dreadful obstinacy of the carnal mind, that through grace their hearts may break, and they may fall into the arms of divine mercy? The latter, we are persuaded, is the scriptural method.

But on this whole subject the scriptures should be our guide and authority. Let us then inquire, whether the bible teaches that the Spirit converts sinners *by moral suasion alone*; or whether they ascribe to him a far higher agency.

There are, undoubtedly, many passages which teach that the Spirit does convince, reprove, persuade, and urge sinners to repent and turn to God. But these do not prove the point, if *other* passages speak of another influence as necessary to effect the great change. We will quote a few which appear to us to be of the latter class. Some of them treat directly of the Agent; others, of his mighty work; and others, of the effect produced, or the character of the new-born soul; but all employing such language as could hardly be applied to a reasoner or persuader, to his persuasions, or to their effect upon the mind.

"Ye must be *born* again. *Born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. But ye have an *unction* from the Holy One. The *anointing* which ye have received of him abideth in you. Whosoever is *born of God* doth not commit sin; for *his seed remaineth in him*, and he cannot sin because he is *born of God*. Hereby know we that we have passed from *death unto life*. You hath he *quickened*, [made alive,] who were *dead* in trespasses and sins. God, . . . even when we were *dead* in sins, hath *quickened us* together with Christ; (by grace are ye saved.) For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and *that not of yourselves*; it is the *gift of God*. For we are *his workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new. The law of the *Spirit of life* in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. To be carnally minded is death, because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, *if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you*. If *Christ be in you*, the body is dead because of sin, but the *Spirit is life* because of righteousness. Ye have received the *Spirit of adoption*, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the *children of God*. God hath chosen you to salvation, through *sanctification of the Spirit*, and belief of the truth. But ye are *washed*, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *by the Spirit of our God*. The love of God is *shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which he hath given us*. May God fulfil all the

good pleasure of his will, and the *work of faith with power*. According to the *power that worketh in us*. It is *God that worketh in you, both to will and to do*. I labor, striving according to *his working, that worketh in me mightily*. That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the *working of his mighty power*, which he *wrought in Christ* when he raised him from the dead, and exalted him at his own right hand. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, *through the power of the Holy Ghost*. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the *excellency of the power* may be of God and not of us. The grace of God given unto me, according to the *effectual working of his power*. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, *through sanctification of the Spirit* unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

Now we think we have before proved, that if a sinner is persuaded through motives alone, even when they are urged by the Spirit of God without any renewal of his heart, he may indulge hope, but is still supremely selfish; because selfish motives only *can* move him, and he *will* take hold of the service of God with a carnal mind. We think also, that these declarations of scripture cannot be reconciled with the simple act of persuasion by the Spirit of God. That such exceedingly strong language would not be employed, if that were all which is intended. That if persuasion would convert a sinner, we should not read of a *work of such exceeding mighty power*; of a *new creation*; of being *born, and created, and made alive*; of being *regenerated and renewed*; of having the *love of God shed abroad in the heart*; of being *God's workmanship*, and receiving an *unction or anointing* from him, by which we are *sanctified*, according to the *working that worketh in us mightily*. The language is figurative, beyond a doubt; but figurative language *means* something, especially in the book of everlasting truth.

If we are required to say what kind of influence the Spirit *does* exert in effecting this change, we can only refer the reader to John iii. 8. We are satisfied, knowing that he does not infringe human liberty; that he does not excuse human guilt; that he vindicates the work of the Mediator and all the ways of God to man; that his wonderful grace affords a ground of hope to the guilty, and enslaved, and despairing sinner; and that every converted soul will joyfully adore the Agent who made him willing in the day of power.

But if these things are so, why then preach the gospel and present motives? For the same reason that Ezekiel prophesied upon the dry bones; because God sends us with his message; and because his Spirit, which he gives to the prayer of faith, has power to make it mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, so that it shall be the wisdom of God, and the power of God. And though we see not *how* the Spirit raises the dead, we count it an honor to be as the clay in his hand to open the eyes of men, or as the rod to smite the rock and make the waters flow. We do believe in the entire depravity of the heart, and that no sinner will turn to God without special and renewing grace. But we also believe that the word of God shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it, and that he sent it to turn men from the power of satan to God. This is our faith, and we are not ashamed to profess it though we be accounted as infidels.

Have we no pity for sinners, however, when they anxiously inquire what they must do? Do we not desire to remove their difficulties, and make the way plain before them? Certainly; but, as we love their souls, we cannot heal their hurt slightly, and hold out delusive encouragements. We *would* remove their numberless difficulties; and for that purpose would show them how they are all congregated and entrenched in that citadel of satan, a *wicked heart*; and *there* would we ply the artillery of heaven till the Almighty come to our help, and the besieged, by his power, surrender to his mercy.

[Three paragraphs omitted, in different places, for the sake of brevity.]

7. 13. 1844 (3).
Z. Hooper

REVIEW
OF
REV. MR. BAND'S TRIAL
OF
"THE NEW DIVINITY."

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REVIEW

OF

"THE NEW DIVINITY TRIED,"

OR IN

EXAMINATION OF REV. MR. RAND'S STRICTURES

ON A

SERMON

DELIVERED BY THE REV. C. G. FINNEY,

ON

MAKING A NEW HEART.

Copy in Spencer's Library

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY PEIRCE AND PARKER,
No. 9, Cornhill.
1832.

1861 Dec. 5.

Gift of

Sam. Dana Hosmer,

of

Cambridge.

(Class of 1850.)

REVIEW.

The New Divinity Tried, being an Examination of a Sermon delivered by the Rev. C. G. Finney, on Making a New Heart. First published in the Volunteer. By Asa Rand. Boston: Lyceum Press. Light & Harris, No. 3, Cornhill, 1832.

The first thing that strikes the considerate reader of this pamphlet is *the novelty and impropriety of the course pursued by its author.* The Rev. Mr. Finney, in his ordinary routine of ministerial duty, delivered in this city, on a sabbath evening in October or November last, an extemporaneous discourse on the making a new heart enjoined in Ezek. xviii. 31. The editor of the *Volunteer*, it seems, was present, and took notes of the sermon; and without asking the permission of the preacher, or even informing him of what he was about to do, the editor, in his next number, occupied three pages and a portion of a fourth with an "Abstract of the Sermon," and thirteen pages with "Strictures." This is, in this country at least, an entirely novel course. We recollect but two instances in which abstracts of sermons made from notes taken while listening to them, have been printed, without the consent of the preachers, and made the subject of condemnatory remarks. Sometime since a clergyman of this city delivered, on a weekday evening, after previous notice, in a neighboring town, a discourse designed, and announced, as an attack on the system of the Universalists. Three Universalist ministers, including the editor of the *Trumpet and Universalist Magazine*, attended, and took notes of the sermon. Subsequently inquiry was made of the preacher, whether the sermon would be published, accompanied with a notification, that, if it were not published, the abstract which had been taken of it would be printed in the *Trumpet*, with remarks in reply. The sermon was not published, and the abstract and remarks were printed in the *Trumpet*. And another weekly paper printed in Boston, and styling itself religious, which, in the severity and abuse with which it treats those from whom it differs, even on points admitted to be not fundamental, is but little behind the *Trumpet*, has, we are told, in a few instan-

ces, pursued the very course taken by the editor of the *Volunteer* in the case before us. Such are the precedents he has chosen to follow, and the sources from which they are derived. Precedents and sources which, all who have a regard for fairness and decency in controversy will agree with us, do not at all invalidate the correctness of the assertion that the course which the author of the pamphlet before us has taken is an entirely novel one, at least in this country.

It is also an extremely improper one. What right had the editor of the *Volunteer* to publish an abstract of Mr. Finney's sermon without his consent? The discourse as prepared by its author was solely his property, to dispose of it as he should think proper. He chose to preach it for the oral instruction of his hearers. But his doing this neither contained nor implied a permission to any one of his hearers to publish what he could retain of it, much less to make such an abstract the subject of strictures in a periodical. To do so, the usage in regard to such things being what it is, as truly violates personal rights as it would to publish in a periodical, what could be recollected of a conversation of a clergyman, with accompanying strictures. But, says the editor (*Volunteer* p. 188) in replying to a hint that had been given by a correspondent, of the impropriety and unfairness of his course. "Editors publish abstracts of addresses and sermons before benevolent societies, almost every week in the year, and sometimes make them the ground of critical remark. The same practice prevails respecting speeches in Congress and other Legislatures." We do not agree that the usage is as here stated in regard to critical remarks on abstracts of addresses and sermons before benevolent societies. But admitting it to be so, in these cases the speaker understands beforehand that what he shall say may be so used, and therefore in delivering his address, or sermon, in such circumstances, gives an implied consent to such a course being taken in regard to it, if any of his hearers shall see fit to take it. But there is nothing like this in the case of a discourse delivered, as was that of Mr. Finney, in the course of the ordinary instructions of the pulpit. This ground of justification, therefore, entirely fails. The editor has alledged another, equally unfounded. He says (*Volunteer* p. 188), "Our justification in this instance is, that sentiments which we deem subversive of the Gospel in their results, are frequently *preached* before this community, which have not been *printed*; and, feeling necessity laid upon us to examine them, and vindicate the truth, we took the only method which was left us." The sentiments referred to are, of course, those advanced in this sermon. And so far is this statement in regard to them from being correct, that the same sentiments have been, not only preached, but also *printed*, in a sermon on the same text in the *Christian Spectator*, vol. vi. p. 241; and in a sermon on Regeneration by the Rev. Dr. Cox of New York, published in October 1829, which has been extensively circulated, and reviewed in different religious periodicals. And various articles inserted in the *Christian Spectator* during the last two or three years advocate similar views. Thus the pleas, and all the pleas, of justification the editor has offered are found to be unavailing.

And how utterly impossible in this way to institute a fair and thorough examination of the sentiments of a preacher? Little more than the heads and sub-divisions of his sermon can, of course, be given. And no one needs be told how different the meaning of these often appears, and is in reality, when stated in the abstract form of a skeleton, from their obvious import when heard or read with their accompanying illustrations. In the case before us, there were three whole classes of important omissions in the abstract as first printed, which were supplied by a correspondent in the next number of the *Volunteer*, and have been incorporated into the Abstract as given in the pamphlet; omissions so important that the editor is constrained to express his "regret" that they occurred, and to "grant that a recollection" of them "would have precluded some of his remarks;"* and it ought to have precluded the principal charges of "unscriptural and dangerous" error which he has preferred.

Fairness, moreover, requires that unfavorable representations and condemnatory remarks, concerning the statements of their opinions by others, should be made only in a similar form to that in which the statements were made. It would be evidently wrong to comment upon and condemn in a sermon or public address, statements and reasonings which have been offered only in private conversation. No less unfair is it to comment upon and condemn, in print, and thus, it may be, before the whole community, statements and reasonings offered in an oral discourse to a single congregation. And if the editor of the *Volunteer* may pursue this course in regard to the preaching of Mr. Finney, he and other editors may pursue it, as they can, in regard to all the sermons, on the sabbath and at other times, of all the clergymen throughout the country. And what would be the effect upon the preaching of our country, prepared for and delivered with the feeling of constant exposedness to such a course of proceeding? What would be the influence upon the occupations and the usefulness of ministers, to be looking after continually and endeavoring to counteract, as they would be constrained to, the innumerable misapprehensions and misrepresentations of them that would be spread through the land? The practice ought, manifestly, to be met at once, and put down, by the marked reprobation of an enlightened and honorable community.

But the whole of the impropriety of the editor's course in regard to this sermon of Mr. Finney is not yet stated. On the back of the pamphlet is printed an "Advertisement," in which is the following sentence. "Since its [the article's] first appearance, the abstract of the sermon has been amended from the skeleton used by the preacher on its delivery." Now what would a person, who has not seen the two articles in the *Volunteer* in relation to this sermon, and has only read the pamphlet, understand by this assertion? Why, clearly, that Mr. Finney had seen the abstract, and corrected it by his skeleton, or had lent his skeleton to the editor for him to supply the needful corrections; so that the abstract as published in the

* *Volunteer*, p. 189.

pamphlet has his sanction. But the facts were, that the editor never had or sought any intercourse with Mr. F. on the subject. A third person, who had heard the sermon, after reading the abstract as at first published and noting in it some important deficiencies, determined to supply them in a communication to the Volunteer; and to aid his memory in doing it, borrowed of Mr. Finney the skeleton he had used in delivering the sermon—such brief notes as can be written, in a hand not remarkably small, upon one side of a blank card. The communication thus prepared was not shown to Mr. Finney, nor did he ever see it till it appeared in the Volunteer. So that, in fact, he never in any way, directly or indirectly, sanctioned the correctness of the abstract, or its publication.

But the course, unjustifiable and improper as it is, has been taken. And in this way the grave charge of “frequently preaching before this community sentiments subversive of the Gospel in their results,” has been publicly preferred against Mr. Finney. (Volunteer, p. 188.) Other Orthodox Congregational ministers in the city are implicated in the charge. And these “unscriptural and dangerous views,” it is said, (pamphlet, p. 13,) “are somewhat prevalent in Orthodox congregations at the present time.” Weighty assertions, truly; which ought, most certainly, to be made only by one who perfectly understands the subjects on which he speaks, makes his statements with clearness and consistency, supports them by the most conclusive proof, and has an evident call of duty to make and publish them. Qualifications all of which we shall proceed to show are not found in the instance before us.

In doing this, however, we would say distinctly, that we are not to be understood as defending or approving every shade of theological opinion, or mode of statement and illustration, advanced and employed by Mr. Finney, in his preaching generally, or in the sermon commented on in this pamphlet. With the sermon as delivered, and as presented in this abstract, we should have been better pleased if the preacher had somewhere, perhaps in the beginning of his sixth remark, *stated formally and distinctly*, (what Mr. F. fully believes, and often asserts in his preaching, and what was plainly implied in this sermon,) that, notwithstanding the perfect ability and obligation of men to make themselves new hearts, not one of them ever has done it, or ever will do it, without the special and efficacious influence of the Holy Ghost. We could have wished also that in speaking, in his second remark, of “the idea of a sinner’s being passive in regeneration,” he had been careful to exempt from the censure he pronounces, those who use such language (as many do) meaning by it, not at all that men are not active in turning from sin to holiness, but simply that they are *undeserving recipients* of the influence of the Holy Ghost which brings them to turn. And we dislike the attempt, in the sixth remark, to explain the mode of the Spirit’s operation in changing the heart. We do not object to the declaration, The Spirit “does not come, and take right hold of the heart, and perform an operation upon it;” nor did we object, when listening to the sermon, to the lucid expansion and illustration that were given of this thought; for we know that many sinners

quiet themselves in their inexcusable stupidity and unbelief, with the imagination that there must be something like the Spirit's "taking right hold of their hearts and performing an operation upon them," before they can have any power to repent; and this dreadful delusion must, if possible, be torn from them. But we cannot accord with the addition, "Many have supposed that he [the Spirit] moves by a direct and immediate act, either upon the *motive* to give it efficiency, or upon the *mind* to make it willing. But there is no mystery about it." No mystery about it, when the Saviour expressly declares that the *method* of it is as unknown as were the principles which regulate the changes of the wind to the Jews of his time! It is, indeed, certain that the ground of the necessity of the Spirit's influence and the mode of his operation, whatever they may be, are such as not at all to interfere with the sinner's agency or responsibility. But who can say that the omniscient Spirit may not "move," in perfect consistency with these, by an "immediate act upon the mind;"* not to create in it certain exercises, but to excite and increase its susceptibilities to the truth presented? No man can prove that he cannot. And if we were under the necessity of adopting a theory in regard to the mode of the Spirit's operation, we should adopt this, for it seems to us most consonant with those numerous passages of Scripture which speak of our being God's workmanship, quickened by the Spirit, created in Christ Jesus, &c. But we admit that these representations do not decide the point. Nor do the Scriptures, we believe, any where decide it. And, we think, our Saviour has plainly intimated that it is not to be decided, by declaring, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." And how obvious is it that, as unembodied spirits influence one another in ways different from those which embodied spirits use, so the uncreated Spirit may, not to say must, operate in moving created minds in ways different from both? If, then, you have discovered and stated a method of the Spirit's operation which seems to correspond with all the phenomena of conversion and sanctification that come under our observation, there is no *certainty* that it is the true method. On this point, therefore, we cordially adopt the language of the author of the pamphlet before us on p. 16. "If we are required to say what kind of influence the Spirit *does* exert in effecting this change [the conversion of a sinner], we can only refer the reader to John iii. 8. We are satisfied, knowing that he does not infringe human liberty; that he does not excuse human guilt; that he vindicates the work of the Mediator and all the ways of God to man; that his wonderful grace affords a ground of hope to the guilty, and enslaved, and despairing sinner; and that every converted soul will joyfully adore the Agent who made him willing in the day of power." We wish we could as fully and sincerely accord with the other representations of the pamphlet. But this we cannot do, and must now return to the unwelcome task of pointing out its defects and errors.

* To move upon the motive—the truth or reason presented, (though such language is sometimes heard) evidently has no consistent meaning.

II. *There is a want of distinctness and accuracy in respect to the meaning and use of theological terms.* The necessity of this in all important discussions is obvious. But in no departments is it so indispensable as in mental philosophy and doctrinal theology, as these sciences are of higher importance than any others, and there is great variety in the usage of their technical terms, which is a principal cause of the unhappy divisions which exist among the friends and promoters of vital piety; they use the same terms in very different senses, and thence conclude that there is between them a wide difference of meaning, when, in many cases, a few moments employed in settling definitions would satisfy them that they are in fact of one opinion. Hence every man who undertakes to discuss questions in mental philosophy, and especially in doctrinal theology, is bound, where important terms have a well understood and commonly received meaning, to adopt that meaning; or, if he is under a necessity to adopt a different meaning, to notify his readers of the fact, and give an accurate statement of the sense which he attaches to the terms; or, if terms have different senses among theologians, to state definitely which he adopts: and he must be careful to use important terms in the same sense throughout his discussion, unless he is under unavoidable necessity as he proceeds to take a different sense, and gives distinct notice of the change. There are fundamental rules of theological disquisition, and especially of theological controversy. They have not been observed by the author of the pamphlet under review.

I. He states it, p. 4, to be one of "the most prominent views in mental philosophy presented in this discourse, that *a nature cannot be either holy or sinful.*" And page 7, he pronounces the representations of Mr. Finney that "the nature of Adam at his creation was not holy," and "that the nature of God is not holy," "an arrogant assumption of knowledge." And he follows up the condemnation with this severe and indignant rebuke,

Hast thou seen God at any time, and soared beyond the display of his attributes and the revelation of his counsels, into the ineffable secrets of his eternal nature? When he laid the foundations of the earth and formed man upon it, and made him a living soul, *wast thou there?* Dost thou know that Adam had no moral direction given to his primeval powers, which ensured his love and obedience to his Creator, when he saw his glory, and began to will and to do?

An awe comes over our minds as we listen to these majestic and authoritative appeals, for they seem to indicate that the Almighty is speaking, and pronouncing sentence upon some rebellious worm. But no; it is the decision and rebuke of a mortal upon a fellow mortal. And we venture to inquire, What is the meaning here attached to the word *nature*? Does the editor use it in the same sense in which it was used by Mr. Finney? Has Mr. F. in fact advanced any *sentiment* in regard to it which the editor does not hold? The pamphlet furnishes no answer to these vitally important questions, for it does not even intimate that there are different senses of the word *nature* as applied to moral beings, and says nothing about the sense in which it was used by Mr. Finney, and is used by the editor. We must look elsewhere, therefore, for aid in the

solution of the questions just proposed. And, fortunately, there is no great difficulty in finding it. The word *nature* is used in three well understood senses as applied to moral beings.

First, it indicates something which is an original and essential part of their constitution, not resulting at all from their choice and agency, and necessarily found in them of whatever character and in whatever circumstances. Thus, it is the nature of all minds to think, and will, and feel. The natural perfections of God are self-existence, eternity, &c. which involve no moral quality. Angels are immaterial in their nature. It is the nature of men, during their existence in this world, to hunger, and thirst. Men have natural ability, i. e. all the faculties requisite, to repent, and love God, &c.

A second sense in which the term is often used is chiefly negative, indicating that the persons to whom it is applied are not regenerated by the Holy Spirit, designating the period of their moral existence prior to their conversion. Thus Paul says, of himself and all Christians, "We were, by nature," i. e. in our unregenerate state, "the children of wrath, even as others; but God hath quickened us:" and again, "The natural man," i. e. an unregenerate man, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; but he that is spiritual judgeth all things." And we frequently speak of persons as 'in a state of nature,' meaning that they are unconverted. In all such cases of the application of the term, however, there is an implied reference to yet another meaning now to be stated.

A third sense of the term is, an expression of the *fact* that there is something in the being or thing spoken of, which is the ground or occasion of a certainty that it will, in all its appropriate circumstances, exhibit the result or quality predicated of it. Thus when we say of a particular species of tree, that its nature is to bear a certain kind of fruit, we mean that there is something in that species of tree which is the ground or occasion of the certainty that it will, in every soil and however treated, while it bears any thing, produce that kind of fruit. So when we say of men, since the fall, that they are sinful by nature, or naturally depraved, we mean that there is something in all human beings since the fall, which is a ground or occasion of the certainty that, until they are renewed by the Holy Ghost, they will only sin in all the various circumstances of their moral existence. And so we may say of God, that it is his nature to be just and good; of angels, that it is their nature to love God; of fallen spirits, that it is their nature to hate God; meaning that there is in them some ground or occasion of the certainty that they will, in all circumstances appropriate for such manifestations, exhibit these moral qualities, or put forth these moral acts.*

* See Edwards on Original Sin, Part 1, Chap. 1, Sect. 2. Dr Woods' Reply to Dr. Ware's Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists, Chap. 3. Dr Taylor's *Consecratio ad Clerum*, 1828, pp. 13, 14. *Christian Spectator* for 1823, p. 197. &c. President Edwards states very clearly, what it is, in his view, that is the ground or occasion of the certainty that all human beings sin, and only sin, till renewed by the Holy Spirit. "In order to account," he says, "for a sinful corruption of nature, yea a total native depravity of the heart of man, there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality infused, implanted or wrought into the nature of man, by any positive cause or influence whatsoever, either from God or the creature; or of supposing that man is conceived and born with a fountain of evil in his heart, such as is anything positive. I think a little attention to the nature of things

Now in which of these senses did Mr. Finney use the word *nature* when he said "the nature of Adam at his creation was not holy," "the nature of God is not holy"? Did he mean that in Adam at his creation, there was no ground or occasion of *certainly* that his first moral actions would be holy; that in God there is no ground or occasion of *certainly* that he will continue to be holy? Certainly not. And in the sense of unregeneracy he did not use the term, for unregeneracy is not predicable of the subjects of which he was speaking. He did mean, and only mean, (what he expressly said he meant, when he preached the sermon) that holiness was not an essential part of Adam's constitution, at his creation, so as not to result at all from his choice and agency, like hunger or thirst; and that God's holiness is not such an attribute of his very being, as not to flow at all from his choice and agency, like his self-existence, eternity, &c. And surely there is nothing erroneous in this opinion. While the fact, in which we have the only consistent meaning which can be attached to the editor's assertions that "the nature of God is holy," "the nature of Adam at his creation was holy," viz. that there was in Adam as created a ground or occasion of certainty that his first moral acts would be holy, and that there is in God a ground or occasion of certainty that he will always be holy; this fact Mr. Finney has not denied, and doubtless firmly believes. Where then is the ground of the editor's condemnation and indignant rebuke of Mr. F. for his declarations concerning the original nature of Adam, and the nature of God?

2. The term *motive*, it is well known to those who are conversant with metaphysical and theological discussions, has two different meanings. Sometimes it means the outward reason which influences the choice. This is the sense in which the word has been almost universally used by theologians in New-England since the days of Edwards. Its other meaning is, the feeling excited by the outward reason presented, or the design which induces to an action. The former has been called the objective, and the latter the subjective motive. And, says a distinguished New England divine,* "There is as great a difference between the objective, and subjective motive [of a miser,] as there is between money and the love of money. Those writers, therefore, who use the word motive, in moral disquisitions, without marking the precise meaning of it, are chargeable with ambiguity and obscurity." The author of the pam-

will be sufficient to satisfy any impartial, considerate inquirer, that the absence of positive good principles, leaving the common natural principles of self-love, natural appetite, &c. (which were in man in innocence,) leaving these, I say, to themselves, without the government of superior principles, will certainly be followed with the corruption, yea, the total corruption of the heart, without occasion for any positive influence at all, and that it was thus, indeed, that corruption of nature came on Adam, immediately on his fall, and comes on all his posterity, as sinning in him and falling with him." And more to the same purpose. Original Sin, Part iv, Chap. 2. The same view is given by Dr. Appleton, in his Lectures, page 132, and by many other standard Orthodox theological writers. The propensity to sin, thus held to be in human nature since the fall, has been often called a *sinful propensity*. But when so called, the meaning is not that it is itself sin, for to attach such a meaning to the language would be, to charge upon those who use it the absurdity of representing that to be sin, which is the cause of *all* sin. The meaning is simply *tendency*, or as Edwards expresses it (Original Sin, Part I, Chap. I, Section i.) "a prevailing exposedness or liability," to sin.

* Dr. Samuel Spring, Disquisitions, first edition, p. 82.

phlet we are examining has frequent occasion to use this word. He condemns the preacher's views of the influence and use of motives in conversion, and employs the term several times in the course of his reasonings. But he never intimates that there is any difference of meaning attached to the word, nor inquires whether Mr. F. and he attach to it the same meaning. Yet we find Mr. Finney saying, God "can have no new ideas, and consequently no new motive;" "many suppose that the Spirit moves by a direct and immediate act, either upon the motive to give it efficiency, or upon the mind to make it willing," &c. And the editor we find saying, "We are conscious that these *affections* and *desires* are antecedent to the determinations of the will, and that *they* operate powerfully as *motives* to fix our choice or decide our volitions, in view of the objects which are presented to the mind, and which excite feelings or affections." The preacher uniformly used the word in the objective sense. The editor uniformly uses it in the subjective sense.

3. Page 10, Mr. F. is censured for having said, "*It is as easy to purpose right as wrong;*" and p. 11, he is represented as "reducing depravity to a trifling matter, - - - *put off as easily* as persons change their plans of business." But there are two different senses in which a moral act may be said to be easy or difficult to a man; the one referring to the nature of the act, and the capacity of the agent i. e. his possession of the requisite powers for its performance; the other referring to the disposition and habit of his mind in reference to the act. Thus we might say, in reference to an avaricious man, using the language in the former sense, 'It is as easy to be generous as covetous'; and, using it in the latter sense, 'It is extremely difficult for him to perform a generous act.' And there would be no contradiction in these assertions, because the language is used in different senses; nor would there be any danger of being misunderstood, for the difference of meaning is perfectly obvious. Now, in which of these senses did Mr. F. employ this mode of expression, when he said, "It is as easy to purpose right as wrong?" Manifestly, in the former sense. And in that sense, the editor, doubtless, accords with the assertion. But he seems not to have been aware that the language is susceptible of any such meaning, and assumes that it must have been used in the latter sense; for he adds,

Most certainly as easy for a holy being, who is inclined only to holy purposes; but is it as easy for one who is dead in trespasses and sins, every imagination of the thoughts of whose heart is only evil continually? Did Paul find it as easy, even long after he was born again? Do sinners find it as easy when they try? Why do they, from the rising of the sun to his going down, turn away from God and rush upon destruction, till God arrests them by his grace? Why did not one sinner ever have mercy upon his own soul, till God stretched out his almighty arm, and drew him from the horrible pit? If Adam had been immediately commanded to repent, he would have been without excuse for disobeying; but being under the dominion of sin, it was not easy to do it, because he would not purpose to do it. p. 10.

All very true, using the language in the second of the senses explained; but, evidently, having no reference to what Mr. F. was speaking of when he said, "It is as easy to purpose right as wrong."

4. Page 12, the editor "submits whether the scheme" presented in Mr. F.'s sermon "*differs materially from the Arminian or Wesleyan system.*" Did he mean to include under the phrase "Arminian system" the Arminianism which was opposed by Edwards and the subsequent Calvinistic writers generally in New England? Certainly, for he is professedly contrasting the "scheme" of the preacher, with what he styles the "old fashioned principles" of the Calvinists. The Arminianism which Edwards and his successors considered as subversive of the "old fashioned principles" they defended, is regarded as the same with "the Wesleyan system," as related to the topics considered in this sermon. But every one who has any accurate acquaintance with the history of theological opinions, knows that there is a material difference. The Arminian views in relation to depravity and conversion which Edwards and others opposed, were those stated in Dr. John Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin; some of the prominent principles of which are expressly denied and condemned in Mr. Wesley's Treatise on Original Sin*; and to the editions of Dr. Taylor's work published after the appearance of Mr. Wesley's *Treatise*, was appended "A Reply to the Rev. John Wesley's Remarks on Dr. Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin." Dr. Taylor and the Arminians of his class, denied that the fall had corrupted human nature, or in *any way* affected the ability or freedom of men to obey the law and the Gospel. The Wesleyan doctrine, on this point is thus stated in the standard writings of the Methodists. John Wesley himself says, in his *Treatise on Original Sin*, "By this one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and passed upon all men. And through the infection which they derive from him, all men are, and ever were, by nature, entirely alienated from the life of God." "Our nature is deeply corrupted, inclined to evil, and disinclined to all that is spiritually good, so that without supernatural grace, we can neither will nor do what is pleasing to God." "*Men have not this power by nature, [sufficient power to do their duty.] But they have, or may have it, by grace.*"* In "the Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," it is said, (Chap. iii. Sect. 3. ¶ 27.) "Man hath this freedom of will not naturally, but by grace. We believe, that in the moment Adam fell, he had no freedom of will left; but that God, when of his own free grace, he gave the promise of a Saviour to him and his posterity, graciously restored to mankind a liberty and power to accept of proffered salvation." And the Rev. Dr. Fisk, President of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Conn. says, in a sermon in the Methodist Preacher for January 1830, "This is the Gospel grace, through Christ, that constitutes the transgressor a free, moral agent, and restores to him the power of choice, which he lost through sin, and thus lays the foundation for all the commands, invitations and directions that are given to the sinner."

5. Page 11, the editor says, "The preacher totally discards the doctrine of 'original sin.'"¹ A serious charge, truly; for, by many, it will be understood as meaning that Mr. Finney has denied the

* Works, New York edition, 1827. ix, 218, 228, 269.

native and entire moral depravity of mankind, which is a fundamental doctrine, and indeed the foundation doctrine, of the evangelical system. But how is the charge sustained? Why, by simply assuming that the only meaning of the phrase 'original sin' is 'transmitted pollution.' "The preacher totally discards the doctrine of 'original sin' or *transmitted pollution*." The dogma of 'transmitted pollution' Mr. F. does deny, believing that individuals would be no more to blame for it than for transmitted color. And his denying this, the editor takes for granted is, of course, the same thing as denying 'original sin!' But did he not know, that there are various other senses, besides that of 'transmitted pollution,' in which the phrase 'original sin' has been used in Orthodox Confessions and standard writings, in some one of which other Orthodox senses Mr. F. may, and doubtless does, hold to 'original sin?' There is, in fact, scarcely a term or phrase of frequent occurrence in the whole science of theology, which has had attached to it greater diversity of meaning, among those agreed on all hands to have been Orthodox in regard to the doctrine of depravity. The phrase was introduced into theological discussion by Augustine, in his controversy with the Pelagians.* As used by the Reformers, the phrase had different meanings; some making it include the imputed guilt of Adam's first sin and inherent corruption, and others confining it to inherent corruption alone. In the former sense it was used by Ursinus, Zanchius, and others; in the latter, by Bucer, Bullinger, Calvin, &c.† The definition of the Augsburg or Lutheran Confession is as follows, "We mean by original sin that which the holy fathers, and all of sound judgment and learning in the Church, do so call, viz. that guilt whereby all that come into the world are, through Adam's fall, subject to God's wrath and eternal death, and that very corruption of man's nature derived from Adam: and this corruption of man's nature comprehendeth both the defect of original justice, integrity or obedience, and also concupiscence."‡ The French Confession says, "We believe that all the offspring of Adam is infected with this contagion which we call original sin, that is, a stain spreading itself by propagation, and not by imitation only, as the Pelagians thought, all whose errors we do detest."|| The ninth Article of the Church of England says, "Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk;) but it is the fault and corruption of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone [in the Latin original *quam longissime*, gone as far as possible, gone wholly] from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit." In the authorized standards of the Church of Scotland, the history of the form of stating the doctrine of the fall and depravity of man is exceedingly instructive to those who would confine Orthodoxy on this subject to any one form of statement. The first Confession of Faith

* De Moor Commentarius in Markii Compendium Theologiæ, iii. 202.

† Ibid iii. 203., F. Turretin. Theol. Elenct. Loc. 9. Quæst. 10. Sect. 2.

‡ Harmony of Confessions, 4to. London, 1643, p. 71.

|| Ibid p. 68.

adopted by this Church, in the beginning of the Reformation, was that used by the English Church at Geneva, in which it was thought sufficient to say, "Through our Father Adam's transgression, we are become children of perdition." The Confession of the Protestants of Scotland authorized in 1560 says, "Man and woman did both fall" by eating of the forbidden tree, "by *which transgression, commonly called Original Sin*, was the image of God utterly defaced in man, and he and his posterity of nature became enemies of God." In 1591 the Form of Examination before the Communion of the Kirk of Scotland asks, "What things came to us by that fall? Ans. *Original Sin, and natural corruption*," distinguishing original sin from natural corruption, and excluding it. And, finally, in 1648, the Church of Scotland adopted the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, which, among the four things which they represent as constituting "the sinfulness of the estate wherinto man fell," mention "*the corruption of his nature, which is commonly called original sin.*"* Among modern writers, acknowledged to be Orthodox in regard to the native character of man, we find a similar variety in the use of this phrase, Edwards' definition is as follows: "By Original Sin, as the phrase has been most commonly used by divines, is meant the innate sinful depravity of the heart." And to this definition he adds, "But yet, when the doctrine of original sin is spoken of, it is vulgarly understood in that latitude, which includes not only the depravity of nature, but the imputation of Adam's first sin;" and says that "most of those who have held one of these, have maintained the other, - - that the arguments which establish the one establish the other, and that there are no more difficulties attending the allowing of one, than the other."† Dr. Hopkins, after giving a detailed account of "the Apostacy of Man, and the Evil Consequence to him," says, "None but" certain persons whom he describes "can have any objection to the doctrine of *original sin*, as it has been stated above, which asserts the universal sinfulness of Adam's posterity to be connected with his first sin by a just, wise and good constitution, made by God when he created man."‡ Dr. Emmons says, "Adam was the only person who committed, and who was guilty, of *original sin*."||

In these quotations we have the following different meanings of the phrase *Original Sin*. 1. The first sin of the first man. This is the meaning adopted by Dr. Emmons and his followers. 2. The first sin of the first man and woman; Scotch Confession of 1560. 3. Natural or inherent corruption; Calvin, Bucer, Bullinger, and the French and Westminster Confessions. 4. Want of original righteousness and inclination to evil; Articles of the Church of England, and of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. 5. The imputation of Adam's first sin, and the innate sinful depravity of the heart; President Edwards, Ursinus, Zanchius and others. 6. Something not described, but distinct from natural corruption,

* For these facts in regard to the Church of Scotland we are indebted to the Philadelphian of Sept. 25, 1831.

† Original Sin, Part 1, Chap. 1, Sec. 1.

‡ System, Part 1, Chap. 8.

|| Sermons, i, 239.

and that came to us by the fall of Adam; Form of Examination before the Communion in the Kirk of Scotland in 1591. 7. The guilt of Adam's first sin, the defect of original justice, and concupiscence; Augsburg Confession. 8. The universal sinfulness of Adam's posterity as connected with his first sin by divine constitution; Dr. Hopkins. Here are no less than eight different meanings of the phrase *Original Sin*, (and the list might, doubtless, be extended,) attached to it by theologians and churches, all acknowledged to be Orthodox on the subject of man's native character, because they all held to the *fact* that, since the fall of Adam, and somehow in consequence of it, men universally sin and only sin, till renewed by the Holy Ghost. But the author we are reviewing, who deems himself fully qualified to bring "the new divinity" to the trial, knows of but one meaning of the phrase *Original Sin*, that of "transmitted pollution;" and, of course, decides that all who do not believe in "transmitted pollution," "discard the doctrine of original sin!"

6. And yet another class of terms there is, his want of knowledge or his disregard of the usage in respect to which is even more glaring, and more fatal to his reasonings, than those which have been noticed. We mean the terms *will*, *heart*, *purpose*, *volition*, &c. In the use of these terms in metaphysical and theological writings there has been no little variety, which has been a fruitful source of misunderstanding, and of real or supposed differences of views, among those who were agreed as to the great facts of religion.

Some understand by the *faculty of will*, the power of the mind to determine to pursue or not pursue a particular train of thought, or perform or not perform some contemplated action of which it judges itself capable; and by acts of the will, or the purposes and volitions of the mind, they understand, its determinations to put forth or not put forth such mental and bodily acts. This is Reid's use of the terms, who describes an act of will as "a determination of the mind to do or not to do something which we conceive to be in our power." And this is the use of the term by a large portion of the class of theologians who style themselves "Old School" Calvinists, and of that class distinguished in New England as "advocates of the Taste Scheme."* By these the appetites, affections, desires, &c. are regarded as distinct from the will and its exercises, as really so as are the understanding and its operations. And the term *heart* they use as a comprehensive designation of the appetites, affections, desires, &c., both constitutional and moral; "the advocates of the Taste Scheme," using the word *taste* as synonymous with *heart*. Thus Dr. Burton, the great authority with this class, says, (Essays, p. 55,) "*The taste, or the heart*, is a feeling faculty."

Another class, having in view the general classification of the faculties and operations of the mind by metaphysicians into those of the understanding and of the will, use the term *will* as comprehending all our appetites, affections, passions, &c., both constitutional

* So denominated from their holding that there must be in the mind some *taste* for an object before it can choose it, and which is the cause of its choosing it. See Burton's *Essays*.

and moral, as well as our determinations; and the term *volition* they employ to express any exercise of appetite, affection, passion, &c. as well as a determination. This usage of the terms is mentioned by Reid as one "which tends to confound things which are very different in their nature;" and is not unfrequent with theologians, in writing and speaking, who are not discriminating and accurate in their use of terms. With these, the terms *heart* and *will* are entirely synonymous.

A third class mean by the term *will*, *the power to choose or prefer*; and by acts of the will, or *volitions* or *purposes* (which are with them synonymous), they mean, *acts of choice or preference*. Thus Locke says, "The will is a power or faculty to prefer or choose." And President Edwards says, "The will is that by which the mind chooses any thing;" and "an act of the will is the same as an act of choosing or choice." And this has been the common use of the terms among theologians in New England since the time of Edwards, except with the few who have belonged to the classes mentioned above as adopting the first of the three usages here described. With those who adopt this third usage, no exercise of the mind is attributed to the will, or called an act of the will or a volition or purpose, unless it is itself or involves a choice or preference, and every exercise of the mind which is itself or involves a choice or preference, they attribute to the will, and call an act of the will or a volition. Of course, our constitutional propensities, which belong to us as intellectual and sentient beings, such as the natural appetites of hunger, thirst, &c.; the social affections, as love of parents and of children, sensibility to the kindness or injury of others, sympathy with their sufferings, &c.; the desire of happiness; the dread of pain, &c. &c.—all these they do not attribute to the will, nor call the excitement or exercise of them volitions or voluntary, till they involve a preference or choice; and when they do involve a preference or choice, they attribute such exercises of them to the will, and call them volitions and voluntary. Thus, for example, Dr. Samuel Spring, (who makes all moral exercises to consist in acts of will) says, "Indifferent exercises are those which are merely intellectual or animal; such as natural conscience, natural understanding, and the mere sensations of bodily pain and pleasure," which, he says, "are not of the moral kind," because they do not belong to the will.* And Dr. Woods says, concerning "the natural appetites, affections and passions," "I am as ready as Dr. Ware to affirm that these, considered as original properties of human nature, are not sinful, and imply no guilt." "Man's actually *choosing* wrong makes him a sinner." "If a man has a propensity or disposition to disregard the divine command, and to pursue the gratification of his own passions, as his *hightest object*, he has what I mean by a propensity or disposition to sin"† And the conductors of the Christian Spectator say, Besides fixed purposes or settled preferences of the soul, "there are likewise in the constitution of the mind certain other

* Disquisitions, p. 167; and more to the same effect, on the following pages to p. 172, respecting "natural affection," "animal sensations," &c.

† Remarks on Dr. Ware's Answer, pp. 46, 44, 47.

propensities, tendencies, or principles, which lie back of moral action, and belong to us simply as intellectual and sentient beings. Of this class are the natural appetites, as hunger, thirst, &c., the social affections, as love of children, sensibility to the opinions of others, a feeling of injury when wronged, sympathy with the sufferings of others, &c.; and connected with them all is the desire of happiness, which belongs to us in common with all sentient beings. Now these, from the nature of the case, are neither sinful nor holy. They result from the inevitable constitution of our being; and we can no more cease to be subjects of them, than we can cease to exist. All that is demanded by the claims of duty is, to keep them in strict subjection to the rights of other beings—to our obligations to God and to our fellow creatures." "What is *revenge*? Not the mere instinctive *sense of injury*, which results from a consciousness that we are wronged. It is only when the *will* comes in, and decides on retaliation, that the mind is in that state which we denominate *revenge*. What is *pride*? Not the mere estimation of ourselves, but an undue *preference* of our own claims, when brought in competition with those of others." "Avarice, ambition, pride, &c., are voluntary states of mind. We do not call the *instinctive feelings* from which they spring by these names. It is only when the *will* comes in, when a *preference* is established, and the *purpose* of gratification is formed, that pride, ambition or avarice exists."* According to the usage of this class then, (and it has been the usage of all accurate New England theologians from the time of Edwards, except the advocates of "Old School" Calvinism, and of the "Taste Scheme,") the will is the faculty or power of choosing or preferring; and a volition, purpose or voluntary act, is every exercise of the mind which is itself or involves a choice or preference.—They too use the word *heart* as synonymous with their sense of the word will, and acts or exercises of the heart as synonymous with acts of the will or volitions. Thus Dr. Hopkins says, "Moral depravity is wholly in the *will or heart*." "The understanding, in these instances, is not considered and spoken of as mere intellect, distinct from the *will or heart*."† Dr. Samuel Spring says, "A moral action is an exercise of the *will or heart*."‡ Dr. Emmons says, "The *heart and will* are essentially the same."§ Dr. Griffin speaks of the renovation of men by the Spirit of God as "a conquest of their *wills or hearts*."|| And (to refer to no more) the conductors of the Christian Spectator constantly use the terms in the same manner: e. g. volume for 1829, page 19, "that act of the *will or heart* in which God is preferred to every other object;" "before the act of the *will or heart* in which God is preferred to every other object;" and vol. for 1830, p. 181, "acts directly associated with a change of the *will or heart*," "in union with this change of the *will or heart*."—The preferences or volitions thus ascribed to the will or heart by this class, some of them distinguish into *principal, ultimate, and subordinate*; and some

* Christian Spectator, 1829, pp. 263, 257, 361

† System, second edition, p. 454.

‡ Disquisitions, p. 54.

§ Sermons; i. 257.

|| Park Street Lectures, 3d edition, p. 109.

into *primary* or *governing*, and *subordinate* or *executive*, purposes or acts of choice. Thus Dr. Samuel Spring says, "There is a subordinate motive, an ultimate motive, and a chief motive. In the subjective sense, a subordinative motive is any choice which the agent possesses for the sake of another exercise; an ultimate motive is any choice which he indulges for its own sake; a chief motive is that choice or volition which affords him the most pleasure: and, in the objective sense of the term, subordinate, ultimate and chief objects, respectively, correspond with *subordinate*, *ultimate* and *principle volitions*. For instance, a man purchases a valuable library, that he may acquire knowledge, for the sake of being extensively useful to the public."* Or, adopting the other form of the distinction, we might say, in the execution of his primary or governing purpose of being extensively useful, he forms the subordinate purposes to acquire knowledge, and to purchase a valuable library. "Some," says Wines,† "have made a distinction between the moral affections and exercises of the will,—or between the *immanent* and *imperate* volitions. The *primary* moral affections, or *immanent* exercises of the will, are such as love and hatred of moral objects." "By *imperate* exercises of the will, are intended those volitions which produce bodily motions. Saints love God, delight supremely in the highest good of his kingdom, and are pleased with his law and government. These are their immanent exercises. Saints choose to worship God, to read his word, and to do many things to promote his glory. These volitions are their imperate or executive exercises of will. The unrenewed sinner is wholly attached to his own private good, which is his ultimate, supreme end. His affection for this object is his *primary*, immanent volition. He chooses to perform a bodily action to gratify his selfishness. This choice is his executive act of will." Dr. Emmons makes the same distinction. See Sermons, i, 257. We must distinguish, say the conductors of the Christian Spectator, "between the *governing purpose* of the soul, and *subordinate* acts of choice. Avarice, for example, may be considered as a *governing* purpose to those particular acts of choice by which avarice selects the means of gratification. These specific acts are all *subordinate*, and may change perpetually as new objects are presented. But the *preference* of wealth, and the *purpose* to attain it, may remain fixed and unalterable."‡ And the same distinction is implied in the language of Dr. Woods before quoted, where he speaks of a man's having "a propensity or disposition to disregard the divine command, and to pursue the gratification of his own passions, as his *highest object*."§

*Disquisitions, p. 53.

† The Rev. Abijah Wines, first professor of theology in the Theological Seminary at Bangor, Me. The quotation here given is from pp. 3, 4, of his "Inquiry into the Nature of the Sinners Inability to make a New Heart, or to become holy," which contains a lucid statement and able defence of the views of "the friends of the Exercise Scheme," and a triumphant refutation of "the Taste Scheme."

‡ Vol. for 1829, p. 361.

§ This ruling choice or governing purpose, it is important to remember, is regarded as being, till it gives place to an opposite choice, in reference to its object, a *permanent* state of the heart or will, the *continuous, habitual preference, or prevailing inclination*, of the soul.

What now is the use of these important terms in the pamphlet before us? A few quotations will furnish the answer.

"We are conscious that these affections and desires [which, he had said, are constantly springing up within us, and constitute a large portion of the exercises of the ever busy soul] are antecedent to the *determinations* of the *will*, and that they operate powerfully as *motives* to *fix* our choice or *decide* our *volitions*, in view of the objects which are presented to the mind, and which excite feelings or affections," p. 4. "The preacher confines the term heart to a single volition, to that *volition* by which a man *determines* on his governing purpose." "We hold that the ruling affection of a man, not his 'ruling choice or governing purpose' gives a character to his other 'moral exercises,' either sinful or holy; and that the 'governing purpose' or *resolution* will be conformed to his ruling affection." "The heart is the fountain or source of all the moral affections or feelings, and all the volitions of a man correspond with his feelings and affections," p. 5. "The heart, therefore, is something far more extensive than the ruling purpose, and comprehends all the moral affections or feelings of the soul. Love to kindred, love to the world, love to Christians, love to God, are predicated of the heart, rather than of the will when separated from the heart. We love an object not so much because we *resolve* to love it, as because it is congenial with our heart or affections. We hate those things which are disagreeable, even when we *resolve* to overcome our aversion." "Are the exercises of the heart, when they do not partake of the decisive character of volitions, of a moral kind?" "The angels, doubtless, love God, on the simple discovery of his glory, without the formality of *resolving* or *willing* to do it" "That love produces holy volitions in quick succession," p. 7. "That perverse *will* controlled by a wicked heart or vile affections." "On the principles of this sermon conversion is simply an act of the sinners own will, without an antecedent or even simultaneous change of affections," p. 11. "If we may be allowed to include in the actions of the man the affections of the heart, as well as the decisive and *determinate* volitions of the will." "The instant after conversion, or if you please at the instant, holy exercises of penitence, or love, or faith, spring up in the new born soul, and very soon, perhaps immediately, *determinate* holy volitions also," p. 13. "It is necessary that the affections themselves be sanctified, or the volitions, which are always influenced by the affections, will not be truly directed to the service of God. How can a holy *resolution* to serve God be formed, while there are none but unholy affections to control the will? A change of character originates in the change of the affections or heart. It is easy to *resolve* right when the heart is first given to him in love," p. 15.

These quotations, viewed in connexion with the account given above of the different usages in regard to the terms, *will*, *heart*, *purpose*, *volition*, &c., make it perfectly manifest what is the editor's use of these terms. He is one of "THE ADVOCATES OF THE TASTE SCHEME." And he understands by acts of will, simply and only *determinations* of the mind. The term heart, he, of course, employs as not at all synonymous with the will; but means by it a something as distinct from the will as is the understanding; a something which he calls "the source of all the affections, emotions or desires," which are, with him, exercises of this distinct and separate faculty. And these exercises are not controlled by the will, but the will is controlled by them in all its operations. And he seems not to know that any body had ever used the terms, and described these faculties and acts of mind, in any other way. He had, indeed, heard that some varied a little in their form of statement; for he says, "Whether these operations of the mind [the affections, emotions and desires] belong to the *will*, or to a distinct faculty termed the *heart*, is not agreed." "The advocates of the 'Taste Scheme'

ascribe the feelings or affections to a distinct faculty, which they denominate the *taste* or *heart*. The friends of the 'Exercise Scheme' arrange both feelings and volitions in one class, under the general name of *exercises*, and ascribe both to the same faculty, the *will*." But so entirely without a just understanding does he seem to have been, of the views, reasonings and objects of "the friends of the Exercise Scheme" as to say, that "it is not very important, whether the affections, emotions and desires, belong to the *will*, or to a *distinct faculty* termed the *heart*:" and that "both sects are agreed that feelings or affections are in some sense distinct from volitions!" p. 4. When the facts are, that "the friends of the Exercise Scheme," as (we had almost said) every one knows, do not admit that feelings and affections are distinct from volitions; that they habitually use the terms *will* and *heart* as synonymous; and that the very object of their spirited and triumphant contest, some years since, with "the advocates of the Taste Scheme" was to prove, that there is no such faculty as *taste* or *heart* distinct from, and by its exercises controlling, the will. And, throughout his strictures, the editor criticises and comments on Mr. F.'s sermon on the supposition that he attaches the meaning to the terms referred to which the editor attaches to them, except the term heart; and to this he all along assumes that no other consistent meaning can be attached than his. Thus he constantly speaks of "the governing purpose" several times mentioned in the sermon, as a mere *determination* of the mind, "a simple act of his own will, without an antecedent, or even simultaneous change of his affections." Whereas the preacher meant by the new "governing purpose" in which he represented a change of heart to consist, such an entire and radical change of the affections as to constitute the *controlling and habitual preference or choice* of the soul; a change from the preference of self, to a preference of God and the happiness of the universe. Mr. F., as is apparent to every one who has noted the different usages above described of the terms *will*, *heart*, &c. and read even the few extracts just given from the editor's strictures upon him—much more who has read the Abstract which the editor has given of his sermon, uses these terms in the third of the senses which have been explained—as they are used by President Edwards, Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Woods, &c. But the editor, being unacquainted with this usage, or not recurring to it in his recollection, applies continually to the preacher's language the first sense, that of Reid, "the advocates of the Taste Scheme," &c.—By this mistake he has been led into several palpable and very injurious misrepresentations of Mr. F., which, with some that have proceeded from other sources, will now be pointed out.

III. *There are in the pamphlet before us various misrepresentations of Mr. F.'s views of religious truth, as presented in the very abstract of his sermon on which it comments.*

1. We have seen, p. 10, that from not discriminating between, the different senses of the word *nature* as applied to moral beings, the editor represents Mr. F. as denying that there was in Adam, at his creation, any ground or occasion of *certainly* that his first moral acts would be holy, and that there is in God any ground or occasion of

certainty that he will continue to be holy ; neither of which Mr. F. has denied ; but only asserted that holiness was no part of Adam's *constitution* at his creation, as were his bodily appetites, his social propensities, &c., and that God's holiness is not such an attribute of his very being as not to flow at all from his choice and agency, like his self-existence, eternity, &c.

2. From the same want of discrimination in regard to the senses of the word *nature* as applied to moral beings, in connexion with his "Taste Scheme" notion that there must be a sinful bias, appetite or inclination independent of volition and prior to it, as the immediate impelling cause of a sinful choice, the editor represents Mr. F. as virtually *denying that God made man upright*. "We," says he, contrasting his own views with those he attributes to Mr. F., "We must still believe that God made man upright." p. 7.—But in the Abstract he has reported Mr. F. as having said, that "when Adam began to act, he made it his governing purpose to serve God," p. 2. That is, clearly, as he came from the hands of his Creator, his grand, all-comprehensive choice, (and, of course, all his subordinate and specific choices, affections, &c.) was of God and the happiness of the universe instead of his own exclusive gratification. Mr. F. denies that God created Adam with any physical appetite for holiness as a part of his constitution, like his appetites for food, drink, &c. ; but he believes and teaches that as God created him, and placed him at his creation, there was a *certainty* that his first moral acts would be holy, and that, in this sense, he made him upright.

3. Page 10, the editor represents the preacher as accounting for Adam's first sin by the assertion, "The tempter appealed to his '*ambition*.'" The word '*ambition*' is included in marks of quotation, and printed in Italics, to call attention to it, and implying that Mr. F. had used it. But what was the preacher's language on this point, as reported by the editor himself? It was this. "When Adam began to act, he made it his governing purpose [his ruling preference or choice] to serve God. He was afterwards induced to change his purpose, through the suggestions of Satan, who told him he would become like God. Wishing to enjoy that distinction, he chose to gratify himself; and in doing this, he transgressed a divine command, and became a selfish being, or a sinner." p. 2. Here is not found word '*ambition*.' Nor is the thing implied, for the love of distinction is not ambition till it prefers the elevation of self to the claims of other beings. Ambition, according to Mr. F.'s use of terms (and, we have shewn, the most common use among Orthodox theologians, at least in New England) is a preference of one's own elevation to the just claims of others. To represent him, therefore, as accounting for Adam's first sin by an appeal to his '*ambition*,' is not only to make a false representation, but to attribute to him the palpable absurdity of supposing a sin in Adam to appeal to previous to his first sin.

4. We have seen, p. 12, that the editor incorrectly represents Mr. F. as "totally discarding the doctrine of original sin," merely because he does not believe in "transmitted pollution," when there

are at least seven other senses in which that phrase has been used among Orthodox churches and writers.

5. Applying to Mr. F. his own use of the terms *will*, *purpose*, &c, as meaning simple acts of determination, and his "Taste Scheme" philosophy—that there must be a depraved or sinful bias or inclination distinct from the will and prior to it to produce sinful volitions, the editor represents Mr. F. as having "made off with the doctrine of *entire depravity*," p. 11; when he himself represents Mr. F. as saying, that Adam, by "choosing to gratify himself, and in doing this transgressing a divine command, became a *selfish being*," p. 2; and all the descendants of Adam, "when they begin to act, make their hearts wicked, by setting out with a purpose [a governing purpose, an all-comprehending, abiding preference] of *self-gratification*," and continue it till "the Spirit produces conversion," p. 3.

6. By the same process—applying to the preacher's language his own "Taste Scheme" philosophy and use of terms, assuming that affection must be distinct from and independent of the will, he represents Mr. F., on p. 5, as maintaining the absurdity that "*the ruling affection of a man*" does not "*give a character to his other moral exercises, as holy or sinful*." Whereas by a man's "ruling choice or governing purpose," Mr. F. means his "ruling affection;" which, in the very terms "*ruling choice or governing purpose*," he implies, if he does not assert, does "give a character to his other moral exercises, either holy or sinful."

7. On the same page, and in other parts of the pamphlet, the editor represents the preacher as *excluding from divine requirement and human duty the social and relative affections, so far as those affections have a moral character, and a multitude of other subordinate exercises.*

"We should include," he says, printing *we* in Italics, and thus indicating that in this he differs from Mr. F., "*We should include in the same class [of divine requirement and human duty] those expressions where the term [heart] is put for the social or relative affections, so far as those affections have a moral character.*" "*We should also include those instances where the word expresses all the affections or exercises of our minds; for surely among them all, there must be many which are comprehended in the divine requirement or prohibition, and which pertain to human duty or transgression.*" "*We say that such a choice or purpose [the ruling choice or governing purpose of the mind] constitutes but an exceedingly small portion of any man's moral exercises from day to day;—and here we are at issue with the preacher.*" "*We believe that where such a ruling exercise comes into being once, especially in the instance of a secure sinner, there are at least a million of subordinate exercises, which equally belong to the heart, which are comprehended in divine requirement and human duty, which are registered in the book of remembrance, of which man must give account in the judgment, and which, together with his ruling passion and governing purpose, go to make up his whole moral character in the sight of God. These innumerable exercises surely, should be embraced in the definition of a term, which, to use the preacher's own phraseology, designates 'the fountain of our moral exercises.'*" p. 5. "By the principles of this sermon, the governing purpose includes all the depravity of man. What, then, becomes of all those 'vile affections' whose name is legion, which are entirely separate from that purpose? What becomes of those millions of *subordinate and separate* purposes which every man is conscious of forming every day he lives? What becomes of that 'body of death' under which every Christian 'groans,

being burdened,' and which subjects him to a dreadful conflict from his conversion to his removal to glory? Are these to be *included* in the governing purpose or heart? The preacher does not include, but altogether *excludes* them." p. 10.

Does the reader ask, in astonishment, how could a man write thus about a sermon, the very quotations from which that he has woven into the representation, speak of a *ruling* choice or *governing* purpose, and assert expressly that this ruling choice or governing purpose is "the *fountain* of our moral exercises;" and the Abstract of which, given by himself, asserts, that the purpose or choice required of the sinner is to be "the governing purpose of *his life*"; illustrates it by "a man's resolving to be a lawyer, and *directing all his plans and efforts* to effect that object"; says that Adam, after his transgression, was "a *selfish* being, and all his children set out with a *purpose of self-gratification*," and continue it till "the Spirit produces their conversion"; that Christians, "though they never give up their governing purpose to serve God, pursue it inconstantly, and this accounts for their instability," &c. ? pp. 2, 3. How could such a representation be made in such circumstances? Why, by a very easy process. By *assuming* that "the ruling choice or governing purpose" spoken of does *not* mean, what the preacher did mean by it, and what the very language he used expresses as plainly as can be expressed, *an habitual state of preference in the mind*, which, of course, in proportion to its strength and constancy, directs and controls the other subordinate purposes and affections: but that it must and does mean, the "*Taste Scheme*" sense, a simple, individual act of *determination*, which is "entirely separate from" the affections.

8. By the same process the editor is brought to say of Mr. F. that his position that, in requiring men to make to themselves new hearts, God requires them to change the ruling choice or governing purpose of their lives, is *at war with both the "Taste" and the "Exercise" schemes*. p. 5. Whereas it has already been made apparent, by the exhibition, p. 15, of the different usages in regard to the terms *will, heart, &c.*, that, in the particular referred to, Mr. F. accords perfectly with "the friends of the Exercise Scheme." With them he accords in utterly rejecting the cardinal dogma of the "Taste Scheme," that there is, in man, a *faculty*, distinct from the will, and originating all moral exercises, and by them controlling the will. With them he agrees that the will and heart are the same thing; that all moral exercises are exercises of the will or heart; and that of the acts of the will or heart, some are primary or governing, and some subordinate. Dr. Emmons, the ablest defender of "the Exercise Scheme," has published a sermon, in his second volume, p. 170, on the same subject and text as the discourse of Mr. F. commented on in the pamphlet before us. In that sermon Dr. E. says, "A new heart does not mean any new power or faculty of the soul. It does not mean any natural appetite, instinct or passion. Nor does it mean any dormant, inactive principle in the mind, which is often supposed to be the foundation of all virtuous or holy exercises. But a new heart does consist in gracious exercises themselves, [or as he, in the next paragraph but one, calls them, free, voluntary ex-

ercises ;] which are called new, because they never existed in the sinner before he became a new creature, or turned from sin to holiness." And "all the sinner has to do," he says, "to make himself a new heart is, to exercise benevolence instead of selfishness, or to put forth holy instead of unholy exercises." How exactly coincident with the main positions of Mr. F.'s discourse.*

9. By assuming that ruling choice or governing purpose must mean, and that therefore the preacher meant by it, a simple determination of the mind, "entirely separate" from affections or moral exercises, the editor makes out a charge against Mr. F. of being inconsistent with himself in saying that that which he describes as "the ruling choice or governing purpose," is "the fountain of our exercises." p. 5. But as Mr. F. uses the terms there is no inconsistency, for the ruling choice or governing purpose *is* the fountain of our exercises.

10. On p. 14, the preacher is represented as having said, in substance, that the heart or governing purpose *changes itself*. "It is said, 'But it may *change* itself, and put away enmity for love.'" And then, with an air of triumph, it is asked "in reply, Will Satan cast out Satan? Will a wicked heart make *itself* humble, penitent and believing?"—But Mr. F. had no where said that the governing *purpose* changes *itself*. His uniform representation was that the *agent* does it; "that the *sinner* should change the governing purpose of his life," "Adam changed his heart or governing purpose," &c. p. 2.

11. Another misrepresentation of Mr. F., as having virtually affirmed that depravity is "put off as easily as persons change their plans of business," has been already pointed out, p. 11.

12. We have also seen, p. 12, that the editor represents Mr. F.'s "scheme" as not "differing materially from the Arminian or Wesleyan system," in relation to the sinfulness and conversion of men. But, on these subjects, the old Arminians held, that men by the fall are not wholly depraved; that there is not in them any inability, even a moral one, to repent; that they have a self-determining power of will, which chooses in accordance with motives, or without them, or against them: in all which particulars Mr. F. differs from them entirely. The Wesleyans hold that the fall destroyed man's free-agency; that 'sufficient grace' is given to all unrenewed men, which restores their free-agency; that, having this sufficient grace, unconverted men are not utterly destitute of moral goodness; that depravity is an 'infection,' a 'taste,' bias or inclination to sin, independent of and prior to choice or volition, and directing and giving character to it; and that conversion consists in putting an end to the governing power of this taste, and creating another, of opposite character, but having the same relations to the will: in all which

* On this whole subject of moral exercises in man, Mr. Finney agrees perfectly with "the friends of the Exercise Scheme" or the Hopkinsians, except only in relation to the originating agency in these exercises; Mr. F. believing that man is a dependent, but *real* AGENT; sustained continually in the possession and exercise of his faculties by the power of God, influenced in all his acts, by motives, and, in all his holy exercises, by the effectual grace of the Spirit, but truly *originating* and putting forth his own mental and bodily acts. The Hopkinsians deny that there is any such agency, and maintain that all the "motions, exercises or actions of men" bad and good, "originate from a divine efficiency." See Emmons' Sermons, ii. pp. 31, 41.

particulars Mr. F. differs from them entirely ; and *in the last two the editor accords with them perfectly !* *

13. On page 12, the editor says of the preacher, "*Omitting* gospel motives, he says, 'To obey the command is indispensable to their own good ; it is only, in other words, commanding them to be happy.'" The word '*omitting*' he underscored in his manuscript, and had printed in Italics. He, therefore, *deliberately* charged Mr. F. with "*omitting gospel motives.*" But is not men's happiness, obtained in obedience to divine requirement, a gospel motive ? Did not our Lord himself say, "Come to me, and I will give you *rest*," "He that believeth shall be *saved*?" And is not the command of God a gospel motive ? Did not Paul urge, "God now *commandeth* all men to repent?" And both these motives are represented as mentioned by Mr. F., in the very sentence in which the editor deliberately charges him with "*omitting gospel motives !*"

14. *Assuming* that a governing purpose is a simple individual act of determination, entirely separate from affection, and that there must be a 'taste' or 'inclination' distinct from and prior to volition, to direct it and give it character, and, consequently, that there must be such a 'taste' for holiness created in the soul, or infused into it, before there can be a holy purpose, and finding that Mr. F. wholly discards this philosophy, the editor charges him with advocating a *selfish* conversion, that makes *selfish* Christians. "This doctrine," he says, "gives it [religion] the character of *self-interest*." "We say, [of the person changed as the preacher had described] he is a *selfish*-Christian, and yet in his sins, with the superadded danger of indulging a fatal and false hope." "The new creature so formed is a *selfish* being still, a *selfish* Christian, a Christian whose governing purpose is *selfishness*, and who must of consequence be still dead in trespasses and sins." pp. 11, 14. And so confident is he in the correctness of this representation, that he presumes to pass judgment upon the thousands and tens of thousands who have been hopefully converted under such doctrine. "We look," he says, "to fruit which such seed will produce, and we find that '*that which is born of the flesh, is flesh still*!'" p. 14. But what is "this doctrine," according to this writer's own statement of it? Why, it is, that, in his conversion, "the sinner *changes the governing purpose of his life*;" a change in sinners FROM "a governing purpose to *seek their own happiness*," to a choice of "*the service of God*;" a change FROM a controlling "purpose of *self-gratification*" and "*seeking their own happiness*," to a *preference of God and the happiness of the universe*! pp. 2, 3. "This doctrine gives religion the character of *self-interest*," and makes only "*selfish* Christians!" What transformations may we work, with perfect ease, by the sim-

* If some other excellent Orthodox persons besides the editor of the Volunteer, ministers and laymen, who charge with Arminianism professing Orthodox brethren, whom they hear urging strongly the natural ability of men to comply with the divine requirements, and the duty of immediate compliance, would settle definitely in their minds what are the principles of their own philosophy in regard to the doctrines of depravity and conversion, and inform themselves accurately what is the philosophy of modern Arminians in regard to those doctrines, they would find that they are themselves much nearer Arminianism and Methodism on these subjects, than those whom they accuse.

ple process of looking at the opinions and statements of others only through the medium of our own philosophy ?

15. On p. 6, the editor professes to bring the preacher's description of the new heart which God requires to the test of Scripture, by quoting a large number of passages in which the word *heart* occurs, and substituting in its place the phrase "governing purpose." And he concludes the enumeration with the following sentences. "It is abundantly manifest that by this definition the sense of the sacred writers would be strangely altered, and the very *heart* of the Bible taken away. Substitute 'fountain or source of the moral affections,' instead of 'governing purpose,' and the sense remains good, although the word 'heart' makes better phraseology."—But Mr. F., as the editor himself reports him, had said that the word 'heart' in the Scriptures, in all cases where it means "the ruling choice or governing purpose," is "the fountain of our moral exercises." But this is not the whole of this case of misrepresentation. In perusing this whole page, the reader would not get the idea that Mr. F. had given any other sense of the word 'heart' as used in the Bible, than that of 'governing purpose.' Indeed the examination here instituted by citing various passages of Scripture, derives all its apparent force from the assumption on which it *seems* to proceed, that Mr. F. must, according to the account he had given of the meaning of the word 'heart' in the Bible, apply to it, in all the passages quoted, the sense of "ruling choice or governing purpose." And, in fact, as the Abstract was first published in the Volunteer, the preacher was represented as having given but two senses of the word 'heart' in the Scriptures, viz. "the *soul or spirit*," and "the *ruling choice or governing purpose of the mind*." And with this account of the sermon before him, the editor instituted this trial of the definition by applying it to various texts, in none of which it meant "soul or spirit," and in all of which, therefore, he might safely assume his readers would take for granted, Mr. F. *must* understand it in the sense of 'governing purpose,' when, in a number of the passages, it obviously has various other meanings. But the fact was, Mr. F. had stated all, or nearly all, these other meanings when delivering the sermon. Besides naming the two senses just mentioned, he said, "Sometimes it means *the whole mind*, and sometimes *the understanding*, and sometimes *the conscience*; in some places it seems to mean *the constitutional propensities* which belong to human nature, whether holy or sinful; sometimes it seems to refer to *the social or relative affections*; often it expresses all *the affections and exercises of the mind*" [intellectual, constitutional and moral:] and this, he intimated, was not a complete enumeration. A correspondent informed the editor of these important omissions, and hinted to him the misrepresentation, into which he had been led by them, of Mr. F., when testing his account of the Scripture meaning of the word heart, by applying it to a variety of passages. The editor published the communication, supplied the omissions in the Abstract as given in the pamphlet, p. 1, and left his application of various texts of Scripture to Mr. F.'s definition as it had stood before! For the convenience of our readers the passages quoted by

the editor are inserted in the margin. By substituting, in reading them, as the editor has done in printing them, the phrase 'governing purpose,' for the word 'heart' wherever it occurs, and then reading them as they stand, with the eight different senses in view which Mr. F. is represented in the Abstract to have given of the word 'heart' as used in the Bible, viz. *the soul or spirit, the whole mind, the understanding, the conscience, the constitutional propensities* which belong to human nature whether holy or sinful, *the social or relative affections, all the affections and exercises of the mind* of every description, *the ruling choice or governing purpose* and so the *fountain of subordinate moral exercises*,—the misrepresentation and unfairness of the author of the Strictures in this case will be apparent.*

16. The Strictures represent Mr. F. as denying the necessity and agency of the Holy Spirit in conversion. "On the principles of this sermon there can be no true conversion. Conversion is *simply an act of his own will*, without an antecedent or even simultaneous change of affections, to which the sinner is induced by motives alone." "This appears from what is above said of a sinner's *self-conversion*." On "this scheme," "the sinner *converts himself* very easily, *by a simple act of his own will*." "Suppose it [the conversion] is genuine, *it is made to rest on the will of man, and not on the promise and upholding grace of God, not on the intercession of Christ that his faith fail not, or on THAT SPIRIT* which is to be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." p. 11. But the Abstract of the sermon, as given by the editor himself, represents Mr. F. as having said, "This view illustrates the nature of *the sinners dependence on the Spirit of God*." "*The Spirit* uses means in *producing conversion*." "Conversion is ascribed, in the Bible, *to God, or the Spirit*; they are *born again by the Spirit*." "There is a sense in which *God makes a new heart*." p. 3.

17. To illustrate the different senses in which making a new heart may be ascribed to God, to the preacher, to the truth or word

* "O ye simple, understand wisdom; and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. This people's heart is waxed gross, - - - lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. The whole land is made desolate, because no man layeth it to heart. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. He is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Ye are the epistle of Christ, - - - written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give. Barnabas exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart. Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; - - - nevertheless Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart; - - - and God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. Thou hast put gladness in my heart. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. My heart shall not fear, though war shall rise up against me. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed."

of God, and to the sinner himself, Mr. F. supposed the case of a man arrested, when about to step over a precipice, by a person's crying to him, *Stop*. And said, "This illustrates the use of the four kinds of expression in the Bible, in reference to the conversion of a sinner, with one exception. In the case supposed, there was only the voice of the man who gave the alarm; but in conversion, there is both the voice of the preacher, and the voice of the Spirit; the preacher cries '*Stop*,' and the Spirit cries "*Stop*' too." p. 3. On this passage the author of the *Strictures* suffered himself to remark, "If the Spirit *only* cries to the sinner, *Stop*, and does not *stop* him, he will go on to destruction." p. 12. Is it possible that the apprehensions of this writer were so affected by looking through the medium of his "Taste Scheme" philosophy, as to have really supposed that the preacher meant that the Spirit of God in "*producing conversion*," "*only* cries to the sinner, *stop*, and does not *stop* him?"

These are the principal misrepresentations, seventeen in number, contained in the *Strictures* before us; misrepresentations which might, nearly all, have been avoided had the editor been able so far to put aside the "Taste Scheme" medium through which he looks at every thing, as to see the plain meaning of the preacher's statements as the editor himself has given them. But this he could not, or did not, do; and hence the most of these perversions; *none of them*, we fully believe, *intentional*.

IV. *In the Strictures before us there are several instances of inconsistency, and some of direct or implied contradiction.* We now speak of the *Strictures* alone: most of the specifications under the last head, are instances of inconsistency between the *Strictures* and their authors own Abstract of the sermon.

1. We have seen that a chief ground of condemnation of Mr. F. in this pamphlet is, that he represents a new governing purpose as all that is required to make a new heart. But, p. 10, the editor himself says, "If Adam had been immediately commanded to repent, he would have been without excuse for disobeying; but, being under the dominion of sin, it was not easy to do it, *because he would not purpose to do it.*" That is, all that was requisite to his repenting was his purposing to do it.

2. On page 11, the author of the *Strictures*, as we have seen, declares his belief of the dogma of "*transmitted pollution.*" But, in the very next sentence but one, he says, "All children *become early depraved.*"

3. In the next paragraph, in giving what *he* considers Mr. F.'s representation of conversion, the editor says, "On the principles of this sermon, conversion is simply an act of his own will, *without any antecedent or even simultaneous change of affections*, to which the sinner is induced by motives alone. *He renounces the world and chooses the service of God.*" And the very next sentence is, "Before he does this, and *when* he does it, *he is supremely and only selfish.*" No change of affections in the sinner, and he is supremely and only selfish, *when* he renounces the world and chooses the service of God! Strange that finding himself using such inconsistent language, did not excite in his mind the suspicion that he had

totally misapprehended the sentiment he was professing to describe.

4. Page 13, he mentions among the views which, he says, "are somewhat prevalent in Orthodox congregations at the present time, and which we believe to be unscriptural and dangerous," the opinion "that the sinner must be active in conversion, and change his governing purpose by his own act." But a few sentences after, he says, "We believe also, that the instant after conversion, or if you please, *at the instant*, holy exercises of penitence, or love, or faith, spring up in the new-born soul, and very soon, perhaps *immediately*, determinate *holy volitions* also." And then, after devoting a few sentences to stating his notion of a taking away of a sinful taste and substituting a holy one, distinct from, and prior to, acts of will, when the Spirit regenerates a soul, and saying (what those whom he is opposing hold as firmly as he) that the "divine influence is *first in order* and the sinner is a *recipient* of it," he says, "whether he were *active* or *passive* in receiving it, when it came suddenly as the lightning from heaven, *we neither know, nor care to know.*" That is, it is an unscriptural and dangerous opinion that the sinner is active in conversion; yet at the instant of his conversion he puts forth holy acts; but still, whether he is active or not, is wholly unknown and unimportant!

5. On page 9, the editor says, The sinner "*can* turn to God, but *will not.*" "He has the control of his powers for this purpose, if *he will*, as fully as in changing his purpose about worldly affairs where he is in the habit of controlling them; but the mischief is, *he will not.*" That is, clearly, all that is wanting is, his *willing* to do it; if he would only *will* to do it, it would be sufficient. But on p. 14, he says, "It is *not* sufficient that a sinner, on the whole, makes up his mind to be religious and act for God."

6. Again on p. 9, he says, "All the preacher has said of the freedom and power of men is perfectly true when applied to man *as God made him.* But it is quite another thing to speak of man in a state of revolt and moral ruin." What the preacher had said of the freedom and power of man was, in substance, that he has complete natural ability and perfect freedom to do what God requires. The sentences just quoted, then, import that, in the view of their author, man, in his "state of revolt and moral ruin," has *not* complete natural ability and perfect freedom to do what God requires. But only a few sentences after he says, "*Antecedently* to this change [when the sinner is born of the Spirit] he *may*, and *can*, do all that God requires."

7. It is not possible to express more clearly and strongly [than the author of the Strictures has stated, *in terms*, what is called among theologians the natural ability of unrenewed men to make themselves new hearts, and repent, and believe in Christ, and love and serve God. He says, as we have just seen, that the sinner "*can* turn to God," and "*antecedently* to his change when born of the Spirit, he *may*, and *can*, do all that God requires." And elsewhere he says,—

"Man is under infinite obligations to *desist* from his rebellion, to *change* his affections, to love God supremely, to mourn for sin with godly sorrow, to believe with the heart on the Lord Jesus Christ, or with that faith that worketh

by love, and to make it his governing purpose to glorify God in his body and spirit all the days of his life. . . . He ought to do this because he has the control of his powers on other subjects, and is in the habit of exercising it ; and because he has all the powers that are necessary for *this* great purpose, *if he will use them* ; and if he will *not*, that unwillingness is not his *excuse*, but his *greater sin*." p. 8.

The sinner "*may*," then, clearly, "*and can*" "*desist*" at once from "that unwillingness." "*Antecedently* to his change by being born of the Spirit," he *may* and *can* *will* to "*use*" his "*powers*" for the "*great purpose*" so well described. Yet, while the editor has thus lucidly and forcibly stated this all important truth, he, throughout his *Strictures*, advocates the "*Taste Scheme*," which teaches that there is in sinners, *distinct* from, and in its exercises *prior* to, the will, a sinful taste or heart, which, says Dr. Burton, the *will cannot change*.* And the disciple of Dr. Burton whom we are reviewing asks, in circumstances implying a strong negation, "But was he active, and *voluntary*, and influenced by his own motives merely, in affecting that instantaneous change?" p. 14. And says, "It is necessary that the *affections* themselves be sanctified, or the *volitions*, which are *always* influenced by the *affections*, will not be truly directed to the service of God. How *can* a holy resolution to serve God be formed, while there are none but unholy affections to *control the will* ? A change of character *originates* in a change of the affections or heart." p. 15. Surely this language, fairly interpreted, asserts that an unrenewed sinner *cannot* "*change his affections, love God,*" &c." as strongly as that before quoted asserts that *he can*.

V. We now proceed to examine *the allegation of novelty* in the views presented in the sermon commented on in the pamphlet before us, and said to have become "*somewhat prevalent in Orthodox congregations at the present time*." The title of the pamphlet, it will be remembered, is "*The New Divinity Tried*;" and in closing his remarks which directly refer to the sermon the editor says, "*We will now submit the matter to the candid inquirer, whether this new scheme*" &c.

Novelties in *doctrine* will be pretty certain to be errors ; and novelties in the philosophy of the doctrines of the Bible should always be viewed with caution, and not received unless they will evidently contribute to the defence and power of the truths of religion. Open-eyed, candid, honest watchfulness in regard to both classes of novelties is, therefore, to be commended. But we should not lightly bring the charge of broaching novelties in religion ; and never, most certainly, should we bring it, without having become satisfied, upon intelligent and careful examination, that it is well founded. This charge has been brought, and published to the world, by the author of the pamphlet before us, against the preacher of the sermon on which he comments, and, by implication, against other ministers and Christians. Is it well founded ?

To what does it refer, to the *doctrines* of religion, or to the *phil-*

* "*The will of man produces many effects ; some it cannot produce. And this change in the heart is one of the latter.*" *Essays*, p. 19.

osophy of the doctrines? This question presents a most important distinction, which it is of the highest moment should be understood, and properly applied. *The doctrines of religion are the simple facts of Christianity. The philosophy of the doctrines is the mode adopted of stating and illustrating those facts, in their relations to each other, to the human mind, to the whole character and government of God.* From this distinction results the following most important practical principle of Christian fellowship and of theological discussion. *All who believe and teach the leading facts or doctrines of Christianity, are Orthodox, though they may differ greatly in their philosophy of those doctrines, or in their mode of stating and illustrating them, in their relations to each other, to the human mind, to the whole character and government of God.* The philosophy of some of them may be erroneous. It may be dangerous, tending to the subversion of the doctrines to which it relates, and of other and even all the important facts of Christianity. Still their error is in their philosophy, not in their doctrines. They cannot be charged with error in doctrine or heresy, without incurring the sin of bringing against a brother a false accusation. It may be a duty to exhibit and oppose their errors, true zeal for the faith once delivered to the saints may require it. But he who deems himself called upon to do this, should be careful to state, that he makes no charge of error in doctrine, that it is the error and the bad tendency of their philosophy of religion that he is about to expose. This distinction, and the principle or rule resulting from it are of such vital importance, that we shall illustrate them by a reference to a few particulars.

All are Orthodox, or correct in doctrine, in regard to the divine nature, and are to be so treated, who receive the great Scriptural fact, that the divine Being exists in a threefold distinction, commonly called persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, partaking alike of all the attributes of Deity, and entitled to receive divine worship, and together constituting the one living and true God. Yet of those who have received this great fact, the large majority hitherto, at least since the time of Athanasius, have adopted the statement, of most of the Protestant Confessions, of the eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Spirit. And not a few, including Ridgeley, author of the *Body of Divinity* once used at Harvard University, Dr. Thomas Scott, author of the *Family Bible*, the late Dr. Samuel Worcester, Dr. Emmons, Professor Stuart, and a large portion of the present New England clergy, have discarded this statement; some thinking that the terms Father, Son and Holy Ghost express the official relations resulting from the work of redemption, others that they indicate the *unknown* essential relations of the three persons. Some have thought the mystery in relation to this subject is in the unity—how the three persons are *one* God; others that it is in the Trinity—how in the one God there can be *three* distinctions or persons. And other differences there have been as to the philosophy or mode of stating this subject, among those whom all acknowledge to be Trinitarians.

All Orthodox Christians agree that sin exists, and is a dreadful

evil, which God forbids and abhors, and for which the creature is alone and wholly to blame. But some of them think, with Dr. Belamy, Dr. Woods, &c. that its existence was the direct object of God's choice, as *a necessary means of the greatest good*: others think, with the celebrated Puritan John Howe, some of the "old school" Calvinists of the present day, the conductors of the *Christian Spectator*, and some of the modern evangelical theologians of Germany, that it is *incidental* to the moral system which the wisdom and benevolence of God have chosen and his power has brought into existence: and others still profess to take the *fact*, without any theory in regard to its relations to God and his moral kingdom.

The Orthodox doctrine in respect to the native character of man is, that in consequence of the fall of Adam, all his descendants sin and only sin, in all the various circumstances of their moral existence, till they are renewed by the Holy Spirit. But there may be various and quite different, statements of the doctrine, or modes of accounting for the fact, without a denial or doubt of the fact or doctrine itself. Thus one may suppose, with Calvin, the framers of the Westminster Confession, President Edwards, and others, that Adam and all his posterity so constituted one moral person, that, in relation to the law and its penalty, his act in committing his first sin was their act, and that for the guilt thus incurred by each individual, he is condemned to abandonment by God, issuing in his want of original righteousness, inclination only to evil and actual transgression, ending, if grace do not prevent, in his eternal punishment. Or, with most of those at the present day who style themselves "Old School" Calvinists, discarding this oneness of moral personality of the whole human race, he may assume that the first sin of Adam is so set over to the account of his posterity, in the view of God's law, that they are considered and treated as justly liable to its consequences, and abandoned of God, and so on, as before. Or, rejecting both our moral identity with Adam in his first act of sin and such an imputation of it to us as has just been described, he may hold, with the author of the pamphlet we are reviewing, and all "advocates of the Taste Scheme," that from our fallen progenitor we have derived a *taste, bias, inclination*, which is not the choice of the mind, but determines the choice, as does hunger or thirst, yet possesses a sinful quality, and justly exposes to punishment. Or, with Dr. Emmons and other "friends of the Exercise Scheme," he may suppose, that depravity consists wholly in voluntary exercises, produced in the mind, at the very commencement of its moral existence, by a direct divine efficiency, exerted in a way which is deemed consistent with man's free-agency. Or, believing with those last referred to that depravity is a voluntary exercise of the mind, he may, with President Edwards when describing the nature of our innate depravity, with the late President Appleton of Bowdoin College, and many others, maintain that the ground or occasion of the certainty that all the descendants of Adam do and will, at the very commencement of their moral agency, form, and give themselves wholly up to, the governing choice or preference of their own gratification to the authority and favor of God and the

general good, is in the constitutional appetites, propensities, &c., which they inherit from their first parents, and which have no moral quality previous to and distinct from voluntary exercise.—All these modes of stating the doctrine, and accounting for the fact, of the universal and entire sinfulness of unrenewed men, have been adopted by those whose Orthodoxy in regard to this doctrine has not been, and will not be, questioned.

And so, to notice but a single instance more, one may maintain, with "the friends of the Exercise Scheme," that the divine influence in producing human character is not confined to holy exercises, but extends also, and without any difference in the mode of operation, to sinful exercises. Others may maintain with the great body of the Orthodox, that divine influence is employed only in the production of holy exercises; and of these last, some may maintain, that the Spirit exerts his influence directly on the mind itself in view of the truth; others, that he exerts it indirectly and only through the medium of the truth; and others still, that we are wholly ignorant of the manner in which it is exerted. And yet all these may hold to the fact that all holiness in fallen men is a result of a special, efficacious influence of the Spirit; and, holding this fact, all of them are Orthodox in regard to the doctrine of divine influence in the renovation and sanctification of men.

The philosophy of a doctrine is, then, manifestly, a distinct and very different thing from the doctrine itself. And there may be, in regard to the former, great variety, and great and even dangerous error, while, in regard to the latter, there is entire agreement, and perfect soundness of faith.*

It is, therefore, a pertinent and most important inquiry which we have proposed, To which does the charge of novelty of views, brought in the pamphlet before us, refer, to the doctrines, or to the philosophy of the doctrines, advanced in Mr. F.'s sermon?

What are the doctrines advanced in the sermon? They are the perfect ability and obligation of sinners to cease from their rebellion against God, and comply with the requirements of the Gospel; their utter inexcusableness in delaying to do so a single moment; that the sinner's compliance with the requirement of the Gospel is his own act, to which he is fully competent, though his performance of it is always brought about by the agency of the Spirit; and that, consequently, every sinner is infinitely guilty for not making him-

* It is not to be inferred from what has been said of the doctrines and the philosophy of religion, that philosophy is of no importance in religion, and should be wholly discarded from it. So far from this, the doctrine of repentance cannot be explained, or directions given for growing in grace, or a false refuge of a sinner exposed, or a cavil of an objector repelled, without using some part of some system of philosophy. All the errors of the various classes of errorists who profess to admit the authority of the Bible, all the excuses of indolent Christians and of careless, delaying sinners, are based on false philosophy. To quote texts will not, in a multitude of cases, convince them of their errors, and tear from them their excuses; for they have false interpretations of your texts, based on their false philosophy. You must, therefore, expose the falseness of their philosophy, and state and illustrate the truth in a way which commends itself to their reason and consciousness and common sense. In no other way can you get an entrance for the truth to their consciences and hearts. And to do this, you must know correctly the relations of the truths of Scripture to the human mind, to one another, to the character and government of God. In other words, you must have and skilfully use a correct system of philosophy of religion.

self a new heart ; that it is the sinner's obstinacy alone that renders necessary the influence of the Spirit for his conversion ; that the Spirit uses means in conversion ; that there is a sense in which the sinner makes himself a new heart, a sense in which the Spirit changes his heart, a sense in which it is changed by the truth, and a sense in which it is changed by the preacher ; that if sinners do not yield to the truth they must perish ; that it is consistent and proper for ministers and Christians to use means for the conversion of sinners ; that conversion is more probable while listening to the preaching of the word than afterwards ; that sinners are to expect no agency for their conversion but that which accompanies the means ; that the eternal destiny of every impenitent sinner is this moment suspended on his at once submitting to God. These are the doctrines, at least all the material ones, advanced in the sermon. Is it against these, or any of them, that the editor of the Volunteer prefers his charge of novelty ? He does, indeed, speak of the preacher's errors and innovations in "doctrine." p. 11. But he did not mean "doctrine" in the proper sense of that term ; for he has expressly told us, that in all the doctrines just stated as those of the sermon, he perfectly accords. He says,

"We perfectly accord with many things in this sermon, which are forcibly exhibited. Man is under infinite obligations to desist from his rebellion ; to change his affections ; to love God supremely ; to mourn for sin with godly sorrow ; to believe with the heart on the Lord Jesus Christ, or with that faith that worketh by love ; and to make it his governing purpose to glorify God in his body and his spirit all the days of his life. . . . He ought to do this immediately, on the first announcement of the Gospel in his ears ; and is utterly without excuse for delaying it a single moment, under any pretence of inability, or indisposition, or dependence on divine agency, or mercy, or sovereignty ; since he has all the powers that are necessary for this great purpose, if he will use them, and if he will not, that unwillingness is not his excuse, but his greater sin. . . . We believe further, that when sinners are converted, it is through the exercise of their own powers, by the agency of the Spirit, and by the application of truth through the ministry of reconciliation. We can therefore fully accord with most of the "Remarks" made in the concluding part of the above sermon. Every sinner is infinitely guilty for not making himself a new heart ; to say 'I can't love God and repent,' is to plead one sin for the commission of another ; the only necessity for the aid of the Spirit arises from the sinner's 'pertinacious obstinacy ;' the Spirit uses means in producing conversion ; there is a sense in which a penitent sinner does make a new heart ; if sinners will not yield to truth, they will inevitably perish, we see the consistency of using means to convert sinners ; it is more probable that they will be converted under the voice of the living minister, than after they have retired, refusing to yield ; if they are expecting any other agency than that which now operates, they will [probably] wait in vain ; and to submit right to God at once is the great point of their responsibility."

What doctrine is there of any importance, advanced in the sermon, which is not embraced in this statement, and with which, consequently, the editor does not perfectly accord, as among "the old fashioned principles" which he professes to maintain ? Not a single one.

Why, then, has he sounded the alarm of "new divinity," and of "views unscriptural and dangerous," and "subversive of the Gospel in their results ?" On account, and solely on account, of the

philosophy of the doctrines—the mode of stating and illustrating them, employed in the sermon. What, then, are these philosophical views? And are they indeed novelties in stating and illustrating the doctrines of the Gospel? Let us look at them, as given in the *Strictures*, and see how stands the evidence in regard to their novelty.

I. It is stated as one of “the most prominent views in mental philosophy presented in this discourse,” and is, of course, regarded by the editor as a prominent article of “the new divinity,” “that a moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone.” But from as old a book as Augustine De Vera Religione, we have seen the following quotation, “*Usque adeo voluntarium malum esse peccatum, ut nullo modo sit peccatum, si non sit voluntarium.*” “Sin is so far a voluntary evil, that it would not be sin; if it were not voluntary.”* And Calvin we find, when opposing those who falsely argue against the certainty of sin in fallen men from the fact that it is voluntary, conceding that it is voluntary—“*voluntarium est;*” and saying, “*Nego consequi quod inferunt, evitabile esse, quia voluntarium sit,*” and “*Pateret non minus voluntarie peccare, qui necessario peccat;*” “I deny the consequence which they derive, that sin is avoidable [may not occur,] because it is voluntary;” “It is manifest that he who sins necessarily [from a moral necessity i. e. certainly,] sins no less voluntarily.”† President Edwards says, “It is a certain beauty or deformity that are inherent in that good or evil *will*, which is the *soul of virtue and vice*, which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind.”‡ Dr. Bellamy says, “All wicked men are *voluntary* in their bad temper. The temper of the mind is nothing but the *habitual inclination* of the heart; but an *involuntary inclination* of the heart is a contradiction.”§ Dr. Hopkins says, “It must also be observed and kept in mind, that sin, as does holiness, consists in the motions or exercises of the heart or will, and in NOTHING else.”|| Dr. Witherspoon asks, “Does any man commit sin but from his own choice? Or is he hindered from any duty to which he is sincerely and heartily inclined? If this were indeed the case, it would not be true, what we are told in the sacred oracles, that God will be just when he speaketh, and clear when he judgeth.”¶ Dr. Samuel Spring says, “What is moral action? A *moral action is an exercise of the will or heart of man.*” “A moral action is the *volition* of a moral agent.” “Nothing is moral which is not *voluntary.*” “Destitute of *volition*, and consequently destitute of *moral-ity.*” “It is as *absurd* to talk of sin separate from moral exercise or volition, as it is to talk of whiteness separate from any thing which is white, of greatness separate from any thing which is great, or of deformity, separate from any deformed subject.”¶ Andrew Fuller says, “To suppose that *any sin* can be strictly and absolutely *involuntary*

* Quoted in De Moor Commentar. in Marc. Compend. iii. 132, from August. de Vera Relig. cap. 14.

† Institut. Lib. II. cap. 5. § 1.

‡ On the Will, Part iv. Sect. i.

§ Works, i. 154. The works of Dr. Bellamy were recommended by twelve distinguished clergymen, of whom are still living, Dr. Miller, Dr. Griffin, Prof. Stuart, Dr. Woods, Dr. Richards.

|| System, i, 289, 290.

¶ Works, ii, 56.

** Disquisitions, 54, 56, 57, 124, 125.

in its operations, is contrary to every dictate of common sense.”* Dr. Dwight says, “Sin universally is no other than selfishness, or a preference of one’s self to all other beings,” &c. And “selfishness consists in a preference of ourselves to others and to all others, to the universe and to God. This is sin, and all that in the Scriptures is meant by sin. In every individual sin, this will invariably be found to be the essential and guilty character.”† Dr. Emmons says, “There is no morally corrupt nature, distinct from free, voluntary, sinful exercises.”‡ Dr. Griffin says, Men “in all their wickedness are voluntary and free.”§ Dr. Woods says of man, “The power of choosing right or wrong makes him a moral agent. His actually choosing wrong makes him a sinner.”|| So much for the allegation of novelty in the view “that moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone.” As this is the main point, the truth of the allegation in application to other particulars may be tested with more brevity.

2. The second “prominent view in mental philosophy” represented by the author of the *Strictures* before us as characterizing “the new divinity” is, that “a nature cannot be holy or sinful.” p.

4. In what sense the preacher used this language has been shown, p. 10. We are now to show that such statements have been common with the best Orthodox theologians. Calvin says, “Neque enim in substantia carnis aut animæ causam habet contagio.” “The cause of the contagion [or corruption of mankind] is not in the substance of the body or the soul,” i. e. is not a constitutional property of the body or the mind.¶ President Edwards says, of the supposition that the doctrine of original sin implies “that nature must be corrupted by some positive influence, something, by some means or other, infused into the human nature, some quality or other not from the choice of our minds, but like a taint, tincture or infection, altering the natural constitution, faculties and dispositions of our souls,” . . . “truly” he says, “our doctrine neither implies nor infers any such thing.”** Dr. Bellamy, says, of the native selfish dispositions of men, “they are not natural in the same sense as the faculties of our souls are; for they are not the workmanship of God, but are our native choice, and the voluntary, free spontaneous bent of our hearts.”†† And Dr. Emmons says, “Righteousness and true holiness belong to the heart, and are free, voluntary exercises.” “There is no morally corrupt nature, distinct from free, voluntary,

* Works, iv. 31.

† Theology, first American edition, iii, 467, 162.

‡ Sermons, i, 234.

§ Park Street Lectures, p. 10.

¶ Remarks on Dr. Ware’s Answer, p. 44. Places may be found in the works of many or all of the authors referred to on this topic, in which they speak of *disposition*, *inclination*, *relish*, &c. without calling them, or intimating that they regard them, as acts of will. But either they do so regard them, meaning to express by these terms *habitual governing preferences of the mind for the objects referred to*, or they are justly chargeable with self-contradiction. There is a statement of Edwards which casts a flood of light on such instances of obscurity and apparent inconsistency. The faculty of will, he says, is, “that by which the soul is some way *inclined* with respect to the things it views or considers; or it is the faculty by which the soul beholds things, not as an indifferent spectator, but as *liking or disliking*, *pleased or displeased*, *approving or rejecting*. This faculty is called by various names: it is sometimes called the *inclination*; and, as it respects the actions determined and governed by it, the *will*; and the mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is called the *heart*.” Affections, Part I Section 1.

† Institut. Lib. II. cap. 1. § 7. **Original Sin, Part IV. Chap. 2. ††Works, i. 201.209

sinful exercises.* And indeed all the quotations under the last head imply the same thing.

3. A third view represented as distinctive of "the new divinity" is, "that the heart when considered in relation to God, is nothing but the governing purpose of the mind," p. 4. What, then, did the preacher mean by this expression? He meant, as has been shewn, that the grand ruling preference of the soul, when the heart is changed, is of God and the happiness of the universe, instead, as it was before, of his own imagined exclusive good. And is there any thing new in this "view"? Is it not as old as the delivery of the command, at Sinai, if not in Paradise, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me?" Was it not the "view" of Joshua, when he said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve?" Of the incarnate Saviour, when he said of Jerusalem, "How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not?" Of the glorified Redeemer, when he says, "Whosoever is willing, let him take the water of life?" And as to the usage of uninspired men, we have already seen, that by most theologians in New England, since the time of Edwards, the terms *will* and *heart* have been used as perfectly synonymous, both when referring to the faculty and to its exercises. And a numerous class of them, we have also seen, have distinguished the exercises of the will into *primary* or *immanent*, and *subordinate* or *imperate*. And when observing this distinction, they have applied the term *heart*, precisely as Mr. F. has done in his sermon, to the former class of exercises. Thus says Wines, "By the term *heart* is commonly understood all the exercises of the will, whether immanent or executive. But in the restricted sense, the term heart expresses the immanent [the primary or governing] exercises." "The new heart imports all holy exercises in man after he is regenerated; but in a more definite sense, the phrase denotes the beginning of holiness in regeneration. As therefore, the new heart is the beginning of holiness, nothing more is intended by *making a new heart* than beginning to be holy, or exercising holy love."† And to the same effect Dr. Emmons says, "All the sinner has to do to make him a new heart is to exercise benevolence instead of selfishness,"‡ i. e. to come to a primary, governing choice of the general good to his own private interest. And how common is it for theologians and ministers, who hold, as the great majority of them in New England have long held, that all holiness and sin consists in voluntary exercises, to express conversion, or the sinners choosing or preferring God and the general good to his own private interest, by the phrase 'giving the heart to God?' Only let it be remembered, that purpose, as used in Mr. F.'s sermon, means the choice or preference of the will or heart, and that governing purpose means the primary, ruling preference or choice of the will or heart; and no one well informed on theological subjects will suspect any novelty in his assertion that, by the command to the sinner to make him a new heart, "is intended: that he should change the governing purpose of his life."

4. Another thing mentioned by the author of the *Strictures* as one of "the most prominent views in mental philosophy presented:

* Sermons, i. 177, 234.

† Inquiry, pp. 4, 5.

‡ Sermons ii. 174.

in this discourse," and characterising "the new divinity," is "that the depravity or moral ruin of man has not abridged his power of choosing right, with the same ease that he chooses wrong." p. 4. This statement we have already seen, p. 11, the editor would not have made had he not misapprehended the meaning of the declaration to which it refers; for in the sense in which the preacher used the expression, "It is as easy to purpose right as wrong," the editor, no doubt, entirely agrees with him. And the form of expression which Mr. F. used, has been, very common among those who believe and teach men's natural ability. Thus Dr. Emmons says, in a single sermon, Sinners "are as able to do right as to do wrong, to do their duty as to neglect their duty, to love God as to hate God, to choose life as to choose death, to walk in the narrow way to heaven as to walk in the broad way to hell, and to turn from sin to holiness as to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord." "Sinners are as able to turn from sin, to change their hearts, or to begin to be holy, as to perform any other religious duty or common action." "Every sinner is as able to embrace the Gospel, as a thirsty man is to drink water, or an hungry man to eat the most delicious food." "Sinners are as able to come to the Gospel feast, as to come to any other to which they are kindly invited." "Sinners are as able to return to their heavenly Father, as an undutiful, wandering child is to return to its earthly parent." "Sinners are as able to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, as to perform the most common and ordinary actions of life." "They can love God, repent of sin, believe in Christ, and perform every religious duty, as well as they can think, or speak, or walk."* And Dr. Samuel Spring says, "Why should men think that they have more natural ability to walk than they have to love Christ?" "We cannot plead that sinners have less natural ability to repent than they have to perform common actions, without opposing his [Christ's] divine instructions."† And the very Strictures we are examining contain language not very dissimilar. Page 8, it is said, "The sinner ought immediately to desist from his rebellion, to change his affections, to love God supremely, &c., because he has the control of his powers on other subjects, and is in the habit of exercising it; and because he has all the powers that are necessary for this great purpose, if he will use them." And again, p. 9, "He has the control of his powers for this purpose [turning to God,] if he will, as fully as in changing his purpose about worldly affairs, where he is in the habit of controlling them." Is not this the very same, in meaning, as to say "that the depravity or moral ruin of man has not abridged his power of choosing right with the same ease that he chooses wrong?"

5. A fifth "prominent view in mental philosophy," said to be "presented in this discourse," and represented as characterizing "the new divinity," is, "that conversion is effected only by moral suasion or the influence of motives." p. 4. If this statement is to be taken as implying, (what is not unequivocally asserted in other places in the Strictures,) that the preacher had taught that conversion is effected without the special influence of the Spirit, it is, as

* Sermons, i. 184, 185, 186, 189.

† Disquisitions, pp. 204, 205.

has already been shown, p. 27, a gross misrepresentation. But perhaps in this place the editor only meant to assert, that Mr. F.'s view of the philosophy of this subject is, that the Holy Ghost always effects conversion by moral suasion or the influence of motives alone. This is Mr. F.'s view of the philosophy of this subject; see the Abstract, p. 3. But it is not, it seems the editor needs to be informed, the view of all, probably not of the majority, of those whom he regards as teachers and disciples of "the new divinity." Among this class he would, doubtless, assign a prominent place to the conductors of the Christian Spectator. But they say expressly, that it is an article of Dr. Taylor's "creed," and speak of it in such a manner as to leave no doubt that it is also of their own, "That regeneration is never effected by *moral suasion*, but is dependent on the *direct and special* influences of the Holy Spirit, operating in consistency with the laws of moral agency."* Mr. F.'s philosophy of this subject is somewhat different. He thinks there is no "*direct and immediate act*" of the Spirit in effecting conversion, "either upon the *motive* to give it efficiency, or upon the *mind* to make it willing." And what the Spirit does he describes thus, "He presents motives by means of the truth; he persuades, and the sinner yields to his persuasion." p. 3. This very language, the reader will observe, ascribes the result to the agency of the Spirit. And elsewhere, he will remember, Mr. F. has said expressly, "*the Spirit produces conversion*;" men "*are born again by the Spirit*," "*God makes the new heart*." p. 3.

But the question now before us relates to the allegation of the *novelty* of the "view" given by Mr. F. of the manner of the Spirit's operation in effecting conversion, that it is by "presenting motives by means of the truth, and thus effectually persuading the sinner to turn to God." And in relation to this question, a single reference will be sufficient. If the reader will look into Ridgley's Body of Divinity, and turn to his discussion of Effectual Calling, he will find the author denying that "the presenting the word in an objective way is the instrument whereby God produces the internal principle by which we are enabled to embrace it." And in this connexion he will find the following statement, "I am sorry that I am obliged, in this assertion, to oppose what *has been maintained by many divines of great worth, who have, in all other respects, explained the doctrine of regeneration agreeably to the mind and will of God, and the analogy of faith*." And in the margin is a reference to Charnock, and Cole, on Regeneration.†

6. Another alledged item of "the new divinity" condemned in these Strictures, is Mr. F.'s *method of "accounting for the fall of man."* p. 10. The account is thus given in the Abstract. "When Adam began to act, he made it his governing purpose to serve God. He was afterwards induced to change his purpose, through the suggestions of Satan, who told him he would become like God. Wishing to enjoy that distinction, he chose to gratify himself; and in doing this he transgressed a divine command, and became a selfish being or a sinner." Dr. Dwight's account of the same event is as

* Vol. for 1830, p. 576.

† American edition, 8vo. iii. 46.

follows. "God created a moral being, capable in the nature of things of either sin or holiness. Originally this being was holy; that is, disposed to obey the will of God; possessing a state of mind propense to virtuous, and opposed to sinful, conduct. Fitted by his moral nature to be operated on by motives, as all moral beings are, he was placed in a world filled with motives; of which some induced to obedience, and others to disobedience. Wherever the means of happiness and misery exist, such motives exist of course, and of both kinds; for these means themselves are the motives; or, perhaps more properly, the happiness and misery are the motives. Now it is plain that in such a world, (and all possible worlds, except a world of perfect misery must be such,) motives of both kinds must, at times, be present to the view of such a being. It is equally evident, that some of the motives to sin may, considered by themselves, become to such a being, stronger inducements to action than some of the motives to holiness. In other words, higher enjoyment may be found or expected, in some course of sin, than in some course of holiness. - - - Angels, though entirely holy, yielded to such motives; as did our first parents also, who possessed the same virtuous character."* What material difference is there between this account and that in Mr. F.'s sermon?

7. It is represented in the *Strictures* as one of the novelties "advanced in this discourse" and belonging to "the new divinity," that *there is no holy or sinful taste, bias or affection, distinct from and prior to volitions, and "controlling the will;"* and the contrary notion is expressly styled "the old doctrine." pp. 15, 19. The erroneousness of this representation has been sufficiently evinced already by the citations, pp. 35, 36, from various standard Orthodox writers, which represent sin and holiness as exclusively voluntary, and not attributable to nature or constitution as distinct from volition. Only two or three more direct testimonies will be added. President Edwards says, "the will and the affections of the soul are not two faculties: *the affections are not essentially distinct from the will; nor do they differ from the mere actings of the will and inclination,* but only in the liveliness and sensibility of the exercise."† "Some suppose," says Dr. Emmons, "that a good heart essentially consists in a good principle, taste or relish, which is totally independent of the will." "But *this sentiment is totally repugnant to the law of love.*" And then he goes on to notice the counterpart of the theory, "that a bad heart consists in a bad principle, disposition or inclination, which is entirely distinct from sinful, voluntary exercises;" and pronounces it false, and contrary to every man's intuitive knowledge.‡ And very frequently in his sermons he makes similar statements.§ Indeed so far is the opinion of Mr. F. on this point from being, at this time, new, and that of the editor of the *Volunteer* "the old doctrine," that, (so completely was his theory exploded by "the friends of the Exercise Scheme" in their controversy with "the advocates of the Taste Scheme,") for

* Theology, i. 457, 458.

† On the Affections, Part I, Sect. 1.

‡ Sermons, i. 203, 204.

§ As in Sermons, i. 344. ii. 162, 172, 194, &c. See also Wine's Inquiry, passim.

the last twenty years, no man has ventured publicly to advocate such an opinion.

So much for the allegation of novelty in the views presented in Mr. F.'s sermon.

VI. It remains only to state, very briefly, what are the *real differences* between the theological views of Mr. F. as presented in the Abstract, and of the editor of the Volunteer as presented in his Strictures. To the editor, looking as he did through the medium of his peculiar philosophy, they appeared to be very numerous. But to the readers of this Review it has, we trust, been made apparent, that, when the Abstract and the Strictures are examined through the medium of the obvious distinction between the doctrines and the philosophy of religion, and an accurate knowledge of the different philosophical systems that have been embraced by theologians, and their various usage of theological terms, these numerous supposed differences nearly all vanish away. *In doctrine, there is no disagreement. And in philosophy, there remain only the three following differences.*

1. Mr. F. holds that "a moral character is to be ascribed to voluntary exercises alone;" and in this agrees with Augustine, Calvin, President Edwards, Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Woods, and the great majority of Orthodox divines in New England from Edwards to the present time. The editor of the Volunteer holds that a moral character is to be ascribed, in part at least, to something else besides voluntary exercises; and in this differs from Augustine, Calvin, President Edwards, Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Woods, and the great majority of Orthodox divines in New England from Edwards till the present time. Which opinion is most consonant with the Scriptures the reader can easily determine by calling to mind these declarations of our Saviour, "*If ye were blind, ye should have no sin.*" "*Ye will not come [are not willing to come] unto me that ye might have life.*"* And which is most consonant with common sense and with fact he can as easily determine, by asking himself whether he can be to blame, or deserve praise, for that which in no degree depended on his choice.

2. Mr. F. holds that the Spirit in converting men does not move them "by a direct and immediate act," but "presents motives by means of the truth," and so "persuades" them, and they yield to his persuasion. The editor of the Volunteer thinks that the method of the Spirit's operation in converting and sanctifying men is not and cannot be certainly known; and if he must adopt a theory, would incline to the opinion that it is by an immediate influence on the mind, exciting, in a way perfectly consistent with its agency and accountability, its susceptibilities to the truth. Of these views we have expressed our preference for that of the editor, and with it Dr. Taylor and the conductors of the Christian Spectator accord more nearly than with the other. And Mr. F.'s view, Ridgley testifies "has been maintained by many divines of great worth, who have, in all other respects, explained the doctrine of regeneration agreeably to the mind and will of God, and the analogy of faith."

* John ix. 41: v. 40.

Both views are held in connexion with a firm belief of the absolute necessity, and the universal fact, of the special agency of the Holy Spirit in producing conversion; and neither has any necessary tendency to subvert that fundamental doctrine. The holding and the teaching of either, therefore, need give no occasion for alarm in reference to soundness in the faith.

3. The only remaining point of difference is, the very important one, in regard to a holy or sinful taste, bias, or affection, distinct from the will and prior to its exercises, and "controlling" volitions. The editor believes there is, and must be, such a thing in every moral being. Mr. F. wholly denies and discards such an opinion. And, in this particular, he agrees with President Edwards, and all who have adopted his general views in theology and mental philosophy from his time to the present, particularly with that class of them in New England who have been "friends of the Exercise Scheme;" and the editor agrees, with a portion of "the Old School" Calvinists, and with the small class in New England who have been "advocates of the Taste Scheme," and with the Methodists.

This, and the one first named in this enumeration, are the principal differences. And that is so closely allied to this, that it wholly depends upon it, and stands or falls with it. Let us, then, test a little, by the application of common sense, this fundamental principle of the editor's whole philosophical system. There is, and must be, it is held, in all moral beings, a taste or bias, either holy or sinful, distinct from and independent of volitions, "controlling" the exercises of the will, and giving to them its moral character. How, then, was it possible for Satan and his companions, and for our first parents, to sin? Their taste or bias was perfectly holy, and, of course, controlled and gave its character to all their moral acts. "How," then, "could" the "motive" to sin that was addressed to them "influence a holy mind?" "How was it possible that such a wicked motive could influence a holy mind?" These are the editor's own questions in reference to "the fall of man,"* which he has not answered; and to which, on his principles, it is plain, no answer can be returned but this, It was not possible, and could never have been. And, therefore, to a demonstration, either the fallen angels and our first parents did not sin, as is represented in Scripture; or God, by a creative act, substituted for their holy taste a sinful one, to be influenced by a motive to sin, and control and give its character to their voluntary acts, and thus was, in truth, the direct cause or author of their sin; or this philosophy is false.

Again, it is agreed that men have "*all the powers* that are necessary to desist from their rebellion, change their affections, love God supremely, mourn for sin with godly sorrow, believe with the heart on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make it their governing purpose to glorify God in body and spirit all the days of their life," p. 8. But it is maintained, by the editor, that their will has not the control of the affections, but the affections, taste or bias uniformly and certainly "control" the exercises of the will, and give character to its volitions. How then can they "change their affections, desist from

* pp. 10, 11.

their rebellion," &c.? "How is it possible that a motive," to holiness "could influence a" sinful "mind?" p. 11. On the principles of this philosophy, it is plainly impossible. And therefore, conclusively, men, on these principles, have *not* "all the powers that are necessary to desist from their rebellion, change their affections," &c. But God certainly requires this of men, of those to whom he has not given converting grace; and condemns and punishes them for not complying. That is, according to the principles of this philosophy fairly carried out, he condemns and punishes them for not doing what they have not all the power which is requisite to perform; which is palpably unjust. Either, then, God does not require unrenowned men "to desist from their rebellion, change their affections" &c., and condemn and punish them for not doing it; or he is unjust; or this philosophy is false.

Once more, it is agreed that the gift of the Spirit to bring men to repentance is not an act of justice, but of pure grace; and that their need of the Spirit for this purpose, "is not an excuse, but their greater sin," for continuing impenitent, p. 8. But it is plainly the demand of justice that men be not required to do, and condemned and punished for not doing, what they have not all the requisite power to perform; and if they have not all that power, and such a requisition is made, it is obviously a debt of justice to them to give them the requisite power. But from the philosophy we are examining, it results, directly and fairly, as we have seen, that unrenowned men have not the power of actually willing to serve God, for their will is under the "control" of a sinful taste or bias, which it cannot change: and they need the grace of the Spirit to change that taste to an opposite one, to "control" their will aright. Clearly, then, the gift of the Spirit to effect such a change, is not an act of pure grace, but of simple justice; and their need of the Spirit for that purpose is a valid excuse for their not complying with the Gospel call. Either this is so, and God is unjust in not dealing with sinners on these principles; or this philosophy is false.*

Now take the other view, held by the great body of Orthodox ministers in New England since the time of Edwards, and bring it to the same tests of common sense. Holiness and sin are to be ascribed in no degree to any thing but voluntary exercises, and consist in acts of choice or preference; and all moral beings, both holy and sinful, have all the powers, (including the power of actually willing,) to choose the service of God and the happiness of the universe, or their own supposed and exclusive advantage. Their present choice is, indeed, from a law of their nature, more likely to continue than the opposite one to be formed. It may be so established, and strong, and cherished, that nothing short of a divine influence will in fact ever change it. But still they have all the powers, including the power actually to will, to change it any moment. What then follows? Why, plainly, that the angels that fell and our first parents could and did, freely, and by their own act, choose their

* The Methodists, assuming that the philosophy of the editor of the *Volunteer* is the true philosophy, argue, in the very way here pursued, to prove the necessity and the reality of universal sufficient grace, to restore "to fallen men the power of choice, and thus lay the foundation for all the commands, invitations and directions that are given to the sinner." And, on the principles of this philosophy, their reasoning can never be overthrown.

own gratification to the exclusion of the service of God, and thus became selfish and sinful, without any change in the constitution or laws of their moral nature, or any act of God creating in them a sinful taste or bias or exerting any direct influence upon their choice,—in the free, voluntary exercise of their own moral powers. And fallen and unrenewed men have, not in name only, but in reality, full power, at any moment, “to desist from sin, change their affections, and love God;” and they may actually do it, and thus comply with the call of the Gospel, and obtain its eternal benefits. They are, therefore, utterly inexcusable and justly condemned for not doing it; and if they persist in not doing it, will, for not doing it, be justly punished. And if, as is the fact, their obstinacy in persisting in their free, unconstrained, wicked choice is such, that the interposition of almighty grace alone will ever overcome it, the very necessity of that interposition, so far from constituting an excuse or an extenuation, is the strongest and most overwhelming evidence of their utter inexcusableness and their most aggravated guilt. Consequently, that interposition, if it shall be granted, will not be to them an act of justice, in any form or degree, but solely an act of pure and sovereign grace.

Which of these two views is most consonant with the known constitution of moral beings, with the plain and immutable principles of equity and of mercy; which best accords with and illustrates and enforces the doctrines and duties of the Bible; which will enable its advocate most plainly, honestly, and pointedly to preach the Gospel, and aid most effectually in stripping men of their guilty excuses, and bring the truth of God most directly and powerfully in contact with the heart, and therefore be most likely to be attended with the efficacious influence of the Spirit; which is the true, and which is the false, philosophy, let the discerning and the candid decide.

And now we have done. Such is the pamphlet we have been reviewing. If doctrines and the philosophy of doctrines are properly distinguished, it does not even prefer any charge of error in doctrine. And the charges it makes of erroneous philosophy, when its misapprehensions and misrepresentations are corrected, are only three in number. Of these, one—the mode of the Spirit’s operation, has no necessary bearing upon the truth of the doctrine to which it relates, and the view dissented from “has been maintained by many divines of great worth, who have in all other respects,” if not in this, “explained the doctrine of regeneration agreeably to the mind and will of God, and the analogy of faith.” And the other two philosophical views which it condemns, may be reduced to one; and that one has been discarded by the great body of Orthodox ministers and Christians in New England for fifty years, and is the manifest absurdity which has just been exposed. The religious public will now judge what ground or occasion there has been for sounding an alarm about “new divinity,” and publicly bringing the charge against Mr. Finney, and by implication against other ministers, of “preaching before this community sentiments subversive of the Gospel in their results,” and proclaiming that “unscriptural and dangerous views are somewhat prevalent in Orthodox congregations at the present time.” That public have the case fairly before them and to them we submit the decision.

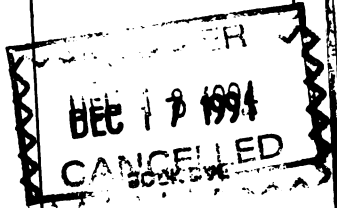
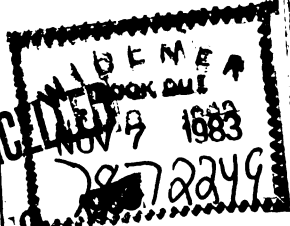


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