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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

way. Indeed, the apprehensions of the missionaries became so much excited in this way, that they seldom travelled without having an antidote for poison. And it was not long before they had to abandon travelling altogether and confine themselves to a few localities where the people were more friendly. Ultimately they had to leave the country altogether, and we need be at no loss to account for the almost simultaneous disappearance of all the religion they had propagated in that country. We have no certain information of the process by which it ceased to be the religion of the country. It is not probable, however, that it was abolished in any of the provinces by a formal enactment of government. It is pretty certain that it did not require the force of a political revolution to overturn it. It is quite as improbable that it was rooted out by persecution, for there were none that loved it enough to be persecuted for its sake. We can only compare it to a magnificent edifice that fell to pieces because it had no foundation upon which to rest; or to a beautiful exotic that withered away because it had taken no root in the soil of the country.

ARTICLE VI.

THE THEOLOGY OF RICHARD BAXTER.

By George P. Fisher, Resident Licentiate, Andover.

No one of the eminent English divines of the seventeenth century is more widely known than Richard Baxter. There are many who prize the accuracy and learning of Owen, and many who admire the calm strength and fertile imagination of John Howe; while dissenters as well as churchmen render homage to the genius of South, of Barrow and of Jeremy Taylor. But neither of these, and indeed few of the illustrious persons of that age, prolific of great men, can claim a reputation so extensive as that of the Pastor of Kidderminster. And yet it is not as a theologian that Baxter is chiefly known. He is least indebted for his reputation to those works on which he most relied for fame. The volumes which are the fruits of his most severe toil and were written "chiefly for posterity," repose, in dust and

silence, on the shelves of antiquaries; while the "Call to the Unconverted" and the "Saint's Rest" are found with the Pilgrim of Bunyan, wherever our language is spoken. The explanation of this fact must be sought both in the peculiar character of the man and of the times in which he lived.

The lot of Baxter was cast in a period when the English mind was roused to an unexampled activity, and the old institutions of church and state were shaken from their foundations, to be reconstructed according to the views of a new age. The contest of Prerogative and Privilege, of hereditary authority against individual rights, had come to the crisis to which it had been for centuries approaching, and men were leaving the halls of debate for the field of battle. The Reformation, by working out its natural results, had generated a spirit of earnest and fearless inquiry upon the subjects of religion. And the Puritans, with whom politics was a secondary interest, from small beginnings had grown into a powerful and organized party, which was endeavoring not only to resist the advance but to cripple the power of the hierarchal churches.

That Baxter was well fitted, in many respects, to mingle in the strifes of a troublous age, is sufficiently evinced by his life. The ardor and energy of his character, his courage, the acuteness and vigor of his mind, his stores of learning and ample knowledge of the various parties, gave him signal advantages. More than all, his piety, chastened by intense and protracted suffering and confirmed by prayer and self-denial, was fervid and constant. The number is small, in any communion, who have cherished more holy aims, or have proved their fidelity to the Redeemer under stronger temptations. At the same time, it will be readily allowed by all, who are familiar with the story of his life, that he wanted the practical wisdom which adapts means to ends. Hence his tireless energy and multifarious knowledge were too often wasted in unpractical labors. It was his ruling desire to bring about a peace among all the parties in church and state. Especially did he wish to unite, on a common platform, the Calvinistic and Arminian theologians. The mode which he chose to attain this desirable end, was the publication of voluminous and subtle disputations. In this attempt to secure a peace, he excited more contention than he quelled, and a great part of his life was spent in the controversies of which he was himself the author. In his own candid and pathetic review of his course, he says: "Concerning almost all my writings, I must confess that my own judgment is, that fewer, well studied and polished, had been better; but the reader, who can safely

censure the books, is not fit to censure the author, unless he had been in the place and acquainted with all the occasions and circumstances." He speaks of the zeal with which he had started controversies for the correction of error, and tersely remarks: "Men are so loth to be drenched with the truth, that I am no more for going that way to work." It is certain that his eagerness fully to explain and defend his opinions led him to compose disquisitions so long and intricate, that they have repelled the mass of readers.

Yet the theological character of Baxter entitles him to respectful attention. As a man of intellect, he is a marvel. Although he had not the advantage of an academical training, he stored his mind with patristic and mediæval lore, and gained an acuteness, as a metaphysician, which few men have ever attained. His strong conviction of the evils of ambiguity impels him often to mourn over the deceitfulness of words, and in the analysis of many of the vexed terms of theology, he has anticipated the work of later writers. His diligence is not less rare than his candor and erudition. "Never," it has been said, "was the alliance of soul and body formed on terms of greater inequality than in Baxter's person;" and yet there was never a body which had so small success in impeding the work of the soul. He is the author of one hundred and sixty-eight treatises, most of which are filled with valuable truth, and almost all breathe the spirit of piety. While his English style is often inaccurate and the style of his Latin works is beneath criticism, he abounds in passages which justify the encomium of Doddridge, who looked on him "as one of the greatest orators, both with regard to copiousness, acuteness and energy, that the English nation has produced." He is, moreover, dear to the heart of the church, as a minister of Christ, who loved conscience better than preferment. He was defamed and persecuted, and has formally submitted his opinions, as well as conduct, to the judgment of succeeding times. We attach a peculiar interest to the thoughts of a man who toiled on amidst almost unparalleled difficulties through seventy-five years, with the single design of extending the kingdom of his Master.¹

¹ Baxter was roughly treated by his opponents. The following are the significant titles of some of the books which were written against him: "Baxterianism Barefaced;" "A Vindication of that Prudent and Honorable Knight, Sir Henry Vane, from the Lies and Calumnies of Mr. Richard Baxter, in a Monitory Letter to the said Mr. B.;" "Rebel's Plea examined; or Mr. Baxter's Judgment concerning the late War." A book, in which passages of his writings are arrayed against each other, bears this droll name: "The Casuist Uncased, in a dialogue

The theological views of Baxter cannot be ascertained from his earlier doctrinal works, since, after their publication, his views underwent important changes. About fifteen years before the close of his life, he published the "Catholick Theologie,"¹ an English folio of seven hundred pages. Only six years afterward he published his one hundred and eighteenth volume, the "Methodus Theologiae,"² a Latin folio of sixteen hundred pages, which exhibits his complete theological system. These two works undoubtedly contain the mature opinions, which were the results of his long and varied study. In the following exhibition of his Theology, only such references will be made to his other works as may explain or confirm the doctrines of these treatises. When it is remembered that Baxter gave little if any time to the revision of his productions, and that his complicate discussions go through almost every branch of theological science, it will not be expected that he should be free from contradictions. The subsequent selections are believed to represent faithfully his predominant views. We will, in the first place, endeavor to ascertain his opinions on the doctrines of Anthropology.

betwixt Richard and Baxter, with a Moderator between them, for Quietness' sake." Atrocious crimes were laid to his charge. (See Orme's Baxter, p. 55.) Scurrilous epitaphs were composed for him during his life-time. (Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. II. p. 219.) After the restoration of Charles II, Baxter endured the persecution of prelates and the gibes of buffoons, who shared together the honors of a dissolute court. "Dr. Dubious" was his *sobriquet* among the wits of the time. His treatment by the notorious Jeffries and his cruel imprisonments are well known.

¹ "Richard Baxter's CATHOLIC THEOLOGIE: plain, pure, peaceable: for PACIFICATION of the dogmatical WORD-WARRIOURS, who, 1. By contending about things unrevealed or not understood; 2. and by taking VERBAL differences for REAL, and their arbitrary notions for necessary sacred truths, deceived and deceiving by Ambiguous, unexplained WORDS, have long been the shame of the Christian religion, a scandal and hardening to unbelievers, the incendiaries, dividers and distracters of the church, the occasion of State discords and wars, the corrupters of the Christian Faith, and the subverters of their own souls and their followers, calling them to a blind zeal and wrathful warfare, against true piety, love and peace, and teaching them to censure, backbite, slander and prate against each other, for things which they never understood," etc. etc. "Written chiefly for posterity, when sad experience hath taught men to hate theological wars, and to love, and seek, and call for peace. (Ex Bello Pax.)"

² "Methodus Theologiae Christianae." 1. Naturae Rerum, } Congrua
2. Sacrae Scripturae } Conformis
3. Praxi } Adaptata,"

etc. "Dicata per Richardum Baxterum, Philotheologum."

§ 1. SIN.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF SIN? *God cannot properly be said to be the cause of sin.*

"God is truly the first cause of the [moral] act by giving the power, and doing all that belongeth to the *fons naturae* to the exercise. And he is the first cause of our liberty, in making us free agents, and he is the first cause of the moral goodness of our actions, by all that he doth by his law, providence and grace to make them. But he is in no way the first cause of them as evil." (Cath. Theol. B. L. Pars I. p. 165.)

— "there is a great difference between God's *permitting* sin (after great means against it) and his *causing* it; between the making of a free agent and the putting of life or death in his choice; and his causing men unavoidably to sin, and then to damn them for it. The holiness of God's nature will stand with the being of sin, by man's causing; but not with God's causing it" (Cath. Theol. B. I. Pars I. p. 573.)

"And it must be remembered that God is far from a *total permission* or *non-impedition* of sin. He always *hindereth* it, so far as to *forbid* it, to *threaten* damnation to affright men from it, to *promise* salvation and all felicity to draw men from it. He tells men of the vanity of all which would allure them to it. And his daily mercies and corrections should *withhold* men from it. Only by *doing no more*, and not *effectually changing* or *restraining* sinners, but leaving them to their own choice under all these moral, restraining means, he *permitteth* sin." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. p. 153.)

"Permission is nothing else than not *efficiently* to hinder." "It must therefore be said that God *foreknows* sin, as a future event, while he *not at all chooses*, nor *absolutely refuses* its existence; but prohibits and in very many ways hinders it, yet not *effectually*; and as an event, He *permits* it." (Meth. Pars. I. cap. 2. p. 70.) See also Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. 87, 140, 157, 165, 529, 708. Part III. p. 106. B. II. p. 36. p. 151 note.

"The devil and man cause sin, and God uses it well. [Deus causato bene utitur.]" (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. 2. 22.) "The devil himself was the first cause of his own pravity; God made him not evil, but he made himself so." (Pract. Works, Vol. XX. p. 433.)

Why has God made men capable of sinning? "We may say that the variety of the Divine Works is beautiful, and that every one has its fitness for a proper work; but the question is for the most part inscrutable to us. And, indeed, this liberty of the will and natural indetermination with the power of freely determining itself, is adapted to the business of this life, which is preparatory to everlasting rewards. He who can say why God has not made all animals rational, or men angels, or stones suns, can solve this question." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 273.) See also Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 138.

We know that God will be no loser by it [by making men defectible], but equally glorified and pleased in the way of recovering grace." (Pract. Works, Vol. XIX. p. 583.)

IS SIN THE MEANS OF GOOD? "Unless I am mistaken, the strife is about a word. That sin is an *occasion* of good, is conceded by all. But whether *occasion* should be called *means*, is to be decided by an explanation of the latter term. If by *means* is denoted any *true causality*, then sin is not the *means* of good; but if by *means* is only meant an *antecedent sine quâ non*, I have no disposition to contend. But that the matter may be understood, it should be confessed that sin has the same relation to the Divine Glory, as a rebellion or treason has to a king who pardons it, or as a disease has to a physician. If there had been no disease, the skill of the physician would have been less conspicuous. But truly the disease has no *causal power* to produce the glory of the physician [*causalitatem ad medici gloriam*]. And indeed the term *means* signifies strictly what, in some way, positively and really *conduces* to the end; and in this sense, sin cannot be called the *means*; just as death is not the means of resurrection; night is not the *means* of morning. Winter is not the *means* of Spring; ignorance is not the *means* of learning, or of the glory of the teacher; but only the *occasion* or the *evil removed*. But if the term *means* is to be taken more widely, for something or nothing which is interposed, or for the terminus a quô, it is to be demanded of those who choose to speak foolishly, that they do not coin their nonsense into articles of faith, or by disputing sacrifice the peace of the church. Good from the occasion of sin is in no wise the good of sin. The *good* which God himself does *against* sin and by sin, as an occasion, is indeed chosen by God. To choose health after disease, is not to choose disease; to choose resurrection is not to choose death. To choose to give money to the poor, is not to choose their poverty; and to choose to pardon a sinner, to justify, to sanctify, to save him, is not to choose sin." (Meth. Pars I. c. 2. pp. 64, 65.)

"It is still false that sin is any medium to God's glory, or desirable, or hath any good." "God's glory is our end, and to forbear things prohibited is not the means. If sin conduce as much as Christ and holiness to God's glory, why may we not desire it, *sub ratione mediû*, though not as *preceptum*?" (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. 610.) "It is the destroying of sin that God is glorified by." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 59, note.)

"He [his opponent] saith that *the Universe would not be perfect, if there were perfect holiness and no sin, and so no pardon or punishment*; but he giveth us no proof, but confident assertion, at all. I need not say, that it would be more perfect if there were no sin; it sufficeth me to say, that it would be as perfect; and so that it is not necessary to the world's perfection, that there be sin or hell" (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. 621.)

"It is a horrible injury against God to entitle him [i. e. to ascribe to him] sin, and make it seem necessary to his ends and honor. Good ends will not justify evil actions." (Pract. Works, Vol. II. p. 300.) See also Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. 536. 655 note. B. II. p. 30.

IS SIN VOLUNTARY? "So great is the dominion of the will in human actions, it may be truly said that what is not voluntary is not sin or merit." "An omission of choice is called voluntary, when one does not choose what he could choose." "The will is culpable, because he either does not use his

power when he ought, or abuses it [male utitur].” “The beginning of sin is an abuse of freewill; or not to choose, when one could have chosen.” (Meth. Pars I. c. 8. p. 214.)

“*Morality* consisteth formally and primarily in the will or *voluntary*.” (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 94.)

“Sin is (formally) the violation of the perfect, holy and righteous law of God.” “It is all willingly done and chosen by a free agent that could not be constrained to it.” “*Voluntarium est omne peccatum.*” (Practical Works, II pp. 244, 246.)

“Human nature has taught all nations of all ages to speak of human actions as voluntary actions, and to ascribe to the will the final praise or blame, the merit or fault of persons and of actions; and in public as well as private judgments to excuse or absolve him who involuntarily does an injury, but to condemn him who voluntarily does an injury.” (Meth. Pars I. c. 7. p. 216.)

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE VOLUNTARINESS OF SIN? *Has the sinful agent the power of contrary choice?*

“The natural freedom of the will consists in the three things enumerated in the following table: viz. 1. and principally, that the will, as a part of the natural Divine image is a kind of first cause (dependent and subordinate to God) of its own acts; on which it is implied that it is a power to do an act, *not yet determined.*” 2. “That it has the power of commanding the other faculties; but in different ways, according to the nature of the faculties commanded. 3. That absolutely, directly and properly, it is so subject to no created power, that by physical motion it can be efficiently determined, or receive the necessity of determining itself.”¹ “To the evil of sin God pre-determined the will of no man; because this is against the perfection of the Divine nature; and it would be against the liberty of *the person* to be so pre-determined to sin.” “Good angels, the solicitations of the Devil, tyrants or friends” can persuade “but cannot determine the will by causal necessity.” “An object can be the occasion of the determination, and is sometimes such and so presented, that the will, in such circumstances, is *always and infallibly* determined to it;” but neither the object nor the intellect which apprehends it, “by a causal necessity determine the will.” (Meth. Pars I. c. 7. p. 208.) “Whether, *de facto*, men equally enabled, predisposed, helped and

¹ It is proper to remark that the self-determining power of the will which Baxter maintains is not the theory that the will “determines its own acts by choosing its own acts,” which is refuted by President Edwards. (Treatise on the Will, Part II. Sect. 1.) Baxter simply teaches, as an ultimate fact of human nature, that, in the circumstances which are requisite for a volition, the mind has the power of choosing or refusing the object. (Meth. Pars I. c. 8. p. 213.) If he inadvertently uses language which implies the absurdity of an infinite series of choices, it is no more than has been occasionally done by the best writers upon the subject, including Edwards himself. Baxter also opposes the liberty of indifference or the theory that the will is determined, uninfluenced by involuntary inclinations (which is refuted in the same section of Edwards’s treatise). He only denies their necessitating power. (See Meth. Pars I. c. 8. p. 207. Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 75 et passim.)

hindered, do yet without any cause but their own *freewill itself*, act or will act variously, is a question that these controversies need not come to. That such (were there such in the world) *could do it*, I take for granted; whatever they [actually] do." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 151.)

"The understanding *guideth*, but doth not *necessitate*. (B. II. p. 153.)

"All pretended middle ways between Hobbes, his necessitation, physical, and true freewill, are but fancies, as far as I can perceive." "I have great reason to think freewill a part of his [man's] natural image;" "and that as God is a *causa prima entium*, so freewill may be a kind of *causa prima* (not of the action, as such) but of the comparative moral species of its own acts." "I say therefore that here is no effect without a cause. *Freewill* may be the cause of various effects, without a various predisposition." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 152.)

"I doubt some think so much of strength or power alone, as if they thought God were glorified by nothing else; or more in an ox or horse, than in a man. And whatever is ascribed to God's sapiential operation, they contemptuously call a *moral causing*, and not a physical; as if God must move men, as he doth the air, the water, or a stone." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 195.)

"They who place the will under a caused or imposed necessity of sinning (either from above or without) either actually deny all sin, or resolve the sin and misery of the damned into the Divine will." "It does not matter whether this is done by the necessitating physical predetermination of the Dominicans, or, according to the great Camero and others, by the necessitating predetermination of the will, through objects apprehended by the intellect; while God is the cause of the law, of the will, of the intellect and of the object. In either way, the doctrine of the infidel Hobbes, concerning the necessity of every volition, is asserted." (Meth. Theol. Pars. I. c. 8. p. 215.)

"By the necessity of existence [i. e. by the necessity of incompatibility], indeed, the contrary act may be impossible. Whatever exists, when it exists, exists by necessity [i. e. it cannot exist and not exist at the same time]; and so its contrary, by necessity, is non-existent. But sufficiency of power to the contrary, even, at the instant before [the choice], *formal* power to the contrary is not inconsistent [with the actual occurrence of the choice]." (Meth. Pars. III. c. 25. p. 272.) "Whoever says that God is *not able* to make a creature with power to determine one volition of its own without His efficient physical predetermination aforesaid, sayeth more against God's *omnipotency* (though on pretence of a contradiction) than I dare say or think."¹ (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 86.)

¹ The course of Baxter's reasoning leads him to conclude that man is free, if God could make him free; and that to doubt the possibility of making him free is impious. Bishop Berkeley, on the other hand, in his celebrated argument for the freedom of the will (Minute Philosopher, Dial. VII.), starts with the admission of his opponent, that God can make a creature free, and proves that man has the qualities which, it is expected, will characterize a free creature. Indeed, the gravest objections, which are offered to the doctrine of human freedom, ap-

"Do you think, 1. That it will be the way of glorifying the justice of God in judgment, to have the world know that he condemneth the world, merely because He will condemn them, for that which they never had any more true power to avoid than to make a world? 2. Or will their conscience in hell accuse them or torment them for that which they then know was naturally impossible and caused by God?" (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 140. See also B. I. p. 40.)

IS THE GUILT OF THE SINNER LIMITED BY THE POWER OF CONTRARY CHOICE?

"Those who are made, capable only of *doing wrong*, cannot do wrong; it is a contradiction. For it is not sin never to have done that, for doing which, we have never received mediate or immediate power from God; just as we do not sin in not flying, like birds, or shining, like the sun. It is not sin to do the only thing we *can* do; [and this] by the irresistible will of the Creator." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 265.)

"Accordingly I judge of *guilt* and *shame* and *accusation*; which will not be a bare discerning of what God made us do or be; but what we voluntarily *did* or *were*, when we could do [or be] otherwise." (Cath. Theol. B. I. Part II. p. 115.)

"The obligation of law ceaseth, when the thing commanded becometh *impossible* without the subject's fault." "A necessity contracted by our own fault (as by drunkenness leading to madness) excuseth not from guilt." "This is a sin (and the consequent acts and omissions), not simply in itself considered, but *secundum quid* and participatively, as it partaketh of the first sin, which is described itself to be 'a *voluntary forbidden act, disabling us to future duty, and virtually containing a sinful life to the end.*'" When such a physical disability is incurred, "strictly and properly God is not said after to oblige him by that law, because he is not *receptive* and *capable* of such *new obligations*. And yet he is not disobliged as to his benefit. For no man getteth a right to any benefits by his fault." (Cath. Theol. B. I. Part I. p. 39.)

"We may answer the old question, 'Whence is evil?' For as sin is a moral thing, etc., unbounded wisdom and goodness having laid our endless

pear to resolve themselves into the question: 'Is the creation of a free agent within the compass of Infinite power?' And it is worthy of notice that the opposer and advocate of freedom confront each other with the same objection. 'You disparage the Divine Omnipotence,' says the former, 'when you assert that a creature can be free to choose his own course.' 'You disparage the Divine Omnipotence,' says the latter, 'when you assert that a creature *cannot be made*, who is free to choose his own course.' Baxter refutes the objection to freedom, derived solely from the prescience of God, by distinguishing between certainty and necessity, and between the *logical* necessity that *an event will be which will be*, and the *real* necessity which would constrain the agent. The foresight no more than the retrospection, of an act, causes the act to be truly unavoidable. Baxter also frequently answers the objections to his doctrine by showing that they apply with as much force to the acts of the Deity as to those of man.

happiness as a reward for obedience, and endless wretchedness as punishment for sin. Without this obedience, there could be no heaven; without sin, no hell. And without a power not to do in both, there could be neither. So then, that God may have leave to make man happy for holiness, man must needs have power to make himself wretched for sin." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 151 note.) See also Cath. Theol. B. I. § IX. 229. In answer to the question, "what is the use of such power [of contrary choice]," he says, "1. If they [men] had power to do good, they could have done it; for what else is power, but that by which I can do the act. 2. The power given was a proportionable demonstration of God's power, wisdom and mercy, and therefore it did good. 3. That it was not used to their own salvation, was their own fault, for which they suffer." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 23.) See also Cath. Theol. B. I. § X. 229.

WHAT IS ORIGINAL SIN? In conformity with the foregoing views Baxter develops his doctrine of Original Sin. Adam's powers, at the beginning of his existence, were in a right state. This righteousness was not superadded after his creation, and yet it was not an essential attribute of his mind. (Meth. Pars I. c. 15. p. 354.) For he sinned and fell, when he had, not "the hypothetical or conditional," but the *true* power to stand. (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 113.) In Adam, original sin "was the forbidden act, and the depraved disposition which followed it." In us, it is *fundamentally* the imputation of Adam's sin; it consists (materially) in "the destitution of righteousness, and in positive corruption." Whether Baxter is self-consistent, therefore, depends on his doctrine of Imputation; or on his answer to the following question:

WHY ARE THE POSTERITY OF ADAM CHARGED WITH HIS SIN?

Baxter speaks of persons who have excited opposition to the doctrine of Original Sin "by feigning an unproved, arbitrary covenant of God, made with Adam and his posterity, which was no law of nature, nor was made [or adjusted] to any other since (according to the change of the covenant), and by which God imputeth Adam's sin to us, not because we were in his loins, (for then it would extend to others,) but because it was *His will* to do so; as if it had been God and not Adam that defiled our natures and made us all sinners, by an unnecessary, if not ungrounded imputation." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 105.)

"My thoughts are these: 1. That we were *seminally* and *virtually* really in Adam; having the very essence of our souls derived from him; not being in him, as the *house* is in the head of the *architect*, but as an *essential form* is in the *generater*; though we call both *esse in causa*. 2. That we were not personally in Adam (though *seminally*); that is, we were not *natural persons* in him, when he sinned. 3. God supposeth no man to be what he is not, or to have *done what he did not*; for he erreth not. 4. God is not the author

of sin; therefore He doth not by arbitrary imputing of Adam's act, and reputed us to have done what we did not, make all men sinners, which Adam could not do. 5. But God doth truly repute us to have been *seminally* in Adam, and to have no essence but what is really derived from his essence; and as when a man is guilty, no part of him is innocent, neque semen, neque sanguis, though they have not a distinct guilt, but *participative*, *qua partes rei*; so we were sinners in that act, and guilty of that act, so far as we were *partes Adami*, and in him. 6. This was not to be at *that time* guilty, as distinct persons; for we were not such. 7. But we, that were then only *seminally* existent, after became real distinct persons, and then that *guilt* even of Adam's act, adhering still to us, became *guilt of persons*, because the subjects of it are persons. Even as if Eve had been made *after* the fall, of Adam's rib, that rib at first was guilty, not by *another*, but the same *numerical* guilt that Adam was, as part of a sinner; for it was a capable subject of no more! But when that same rib was made a *person*, it would be a guilty person; for it lost not the guilt by that change. But then it is not only or chiefly our bodies that are from Adam, (which are from the elements in our daily food), but our *souls*; and therefore the adherence of the guilt to a rational spirit essentially flowing from another's essence, is more easily understood and defended than that of the corporal rib could be. 8. I do (contrary to excellent Jos. Placeus) suppose that in *primo instanti*, this, our participation in Adam's guilt, is in order before our qualitative pravity; and that God doth therefore deny us His Spirit first, to make us originally holy, not only because Adam, but because we in Adam (as aforesaid) did forfeit and expel it. 9. I think that some men's assertion of a decree or covenant of God, that if Adam fell, any more should be imputed to his offspring than they were thus *really guilty* of themselves, is the bold addition of men's invention, of greater audacity than the addition of ceremonies to the worship of God, which yet some are more sensible of. 10. I think if Adam had not sinned that *same first sin*, but had sinned another sin in the next hour, or day, or month, or year, or any time before generation, it would have been equally ours, as this first was, because we were *equally in him*, and no Scripture-covenant makes a difference." 12. "I doubt not but if Adam had never sinned, yet (supposing the same covenant [i. e. legal dispensation] to stand), if his sons after him had sinned, we should have been guilty of it as we are of his sin; yea, had it been but our nearest parents. 13. I doubt not but that we are still so guilty of our nearer parents' sins,¹ further than

¹ Baxter held that the original sin of infants is pardoned at their baptism; and even when the rite is, for a good reason, omitted, the offspring of pious parents are saved. They are regarded as parts of their parents and are therefore members of the church and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. The Holy Spirit renews their heart from their infancy, and they are to grow up in the exercise of holy faith. The supposed fact that the children of pious parents sometimes lead unholy lives, when no marked fault can be charged on their parents, was one cause of Baxter's difficulties on the subject of "Perseverance." It seemed to him

as the introduction of the new pardoning covenant, and the oft pardons by it, and the incapacity of nature to bear any more punishment may make a difference." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 111.)

"When Adam sinned, every part of his body participated in his guilt (*ejus reatum participavit*). And if a leg or an arm had been cut off, one would not at all attribute innocence to this limb; but at the Resurrection it would bring back its part of the guilt." "But when we were *paris*, we were not innocent (not more than an amputated foot is innocent)." "That the will is the primary seat of moral good and evil, we grant. But from it, the whole body becomes participant of the guilt (*reatus particeps*)." (Meth. Pars I. c. 15. p. 370.)

To the objection, "What is involuntary is not sin, original depravity is not voluntary and therefore is not sin," he replies by denying the *minor* premise; and avers that original sin is voluntary, "since it proceeds from the act of him, from whom our essence proceeds." (Meth. Pars I. c. 15. p. 376.) "Why am I guilty of what Adam did, but because I have a nature that was seminally in him; and was it not proximately in my nearer parents?" (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 105.)

"God is the author of no man's sin, but the Creator of his nature, which voluntarily sinned, when it had power not to sin; and by his own will *man* subjected himself to the deceiver." (Cath. Theol. B. I. § XX. p. 118.) See also B. I. Pars III. p. 101. B. II. p. 128.

Baxter endeavors to relieve himself from the charge of materialism by a physiological disquisition, in which he attempts to combine the theories of Traducianism and Creationism. (Meth. Pars I. c. 15. p. 371.)¹

not an unreasonable hypothesis that, when once converted, they may actually fall away. (See Meth. Pars III. c. 9. p. 98, et passim.)

¹ Baxter's doctrine of original sin unquestionably develops the ancient doctrine of Imputation. It is taught by the earliest Christian writers. Origen (of the third century) held that men were tainted with sins committed in a former state. It was the opinion of Tertullian and the Traduciani "that the souls of children have existed in reality or at least potentially, in their parents, and this as far back as Adam; and that in this way the souls of all his posterity participated in the actions done in his person, although they themselves were never after conscious of such an action." (Knapp's Theology, p. 275.) The doctrine of Ambrose and Augustine may be learned from the clear and indisputable statements of Neander. Ambrose "says: 'We have all sinned in the first man; and, with the propagation of the nature, the propagation of the guilt also has passed from one to all. In him *human nature* sinned.' In one aspect, the corruption which passed from the first parent to all his posterity, seems to be derived from the law of natural propagation; in another, a certain inherent connection seems to be supposed between the first member of the human race, as one in whom *the whole kind was already contained in the germ, and all the later members of the race*; as indeed Ambrose was already led to this view by the phrase 'in quo' in the Latin version of Rom. 5: 12; which expression was referred to Adam. This idea was afterwards more fully developed by the Philosophical Realism of Augustine." (Neander's Church His-

WHAT CONTROL HAS GOD OVER SIN? *God foreknew sin.* It is important to observe, in this place, the peculiar doctrine of Baxter

tory, Vol. I. pp. 562, 563.) The "participation of all in Adam's transgression, Augustine made clear to his own mind in this way: Adam was the representative of the whole race, and bore in himself *the entire human nature* and kind, in the germ, since it was from him it unfolded itself. And this theory could easily blend with Augustine's speculative form of thought, as he had appropriated to himself the Platonico-Aristotelian Realism in the doctrine of general conceptions, and conceived of general conceptions as the original types of the kind, realized in individual things. Furthermore, his slight acquaintance with the Greek language and his habit of reading the Holy Scriptures in the Latin translation, led him to find a confirmation of his theory in a falsely translated passage of the Epistle to Romans, 5: 12." (Neander's Ch. Hist., Vol. I. p. 609.) That this was the doctrine of Augustine is also shown by Bretschneider and Döderlein. "In Adam all sinned; in the loins of Adam was the human race; in him, we were all one man," is the language of this father. "In Adamo omnes peccarunt; in lumbis Adami erat genus humanum:" "omnes eramus unus ille homo." Augustine, while he did not formally admit, yet did not deny the doctrine of Traducianism. The theory of Augustine "was the prevailing theory among the schoolmen, and even throughout the sixteenth century and until about the middle of the seventeenth, when it was contested by the French reformed theologians, Joshua Placcæus and Moses Amyraldus, who, however, were violently opposed." (Knapp's Theology, p. 276.) It is the doctrine of Anselm of Canterbury. (Neander's Ch. Hist., Vol. IV. p. 492.) The influence of Augustine stamped this doctrine upon the theology of Anselm and contemporary schoolmen of the same philosophic sect, as well as upon the systems of modern theologians. (Neander, Vol. IV. p. 492.)

We "sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression" is the phrase of the Westminster Assembly.

The same doctrine is taught by President Edwards in his Treatise on Original Sin. "Therefore I am humbly of opinion," he says, "that if any have supposed the children of Adam to come into the world with a double guilt, one the guilt of Adam's sin, another the guilt arising from their having a corrupt heart, they have not so well conceived of the matter. The guilt a man has on his soul at his first existence, is one and simple, viz. the guilt of the original apostasy, the guilt of the sin by which *the species first rebelled against God.*" (Edwards on Original Sin. Ch. III.) He also says: "The sin of the apostasy is not theirs [i. e. ours] merely because God imputes it to them. But it is TRULY AND PROPERLY THEIRS, and on that ground God imputes it to them." (Ib. Ch. III.) If it be true that Edwards in his argument for the doctrine of original sin, as the Princeton Essayist (Princeton Theol. Essays, 1st series, p. 139) has said, "philosophizes on the nature of unity until he confounds all notions of personal identity," the fact serves to show how his great mind toiled to avoid the necessity of making God impute to men a sin which is not, previously, "truly and properly" their own.

The Calvinistic or Augustinian doctrine of Imputation may be thus stated: Man, or human nature, or the human race was in Adam and constituted ONE PERSON; and in consequence of their *real* (though not individual) participation in his offence, men are, when they are born or become *distinct* persons, guilty of

with respect to the Divine foreknowledge. He rejected the theory

the sin which they *really* committed in their progenitor and are condemned on account of it. This is Calvinism; but this doctrine of Calvinism is now very often abandoned.

There is, however, another doctrine, which has borrowed from Calvinism the name of "Imputation," and may be thus stated: The human race were not in Adam and did not really participate in his sin; but God imputes or ascribes the sin of their progenitor to all men, and, on the ground of this imputation, judicially condemns and punishes them.

Between the Calvinistic and the latter doctrine there is a radical and irreconcilable difference. The Calvinistic doctrine imputes to men what is truly and properly their own; while the latter doctrine imputes to them what is *not* truly or properly their own. The Calvinistic doctrine makes men *guilty* in the sense of sinful, for the sin of Adam; but the latter calls them guilty only in the sense of "exposed to punishment." The Calvinistic doctrine makes the punishment of men for Adam's sin an infliction of evil for their own share in his sinful act; and the latter doctrine makes it a judicial infliction of evil for an act in which they had *no* real participation. It should be added that those theologians who are adduced to sustain the latter doctrine, make the secondary or covenant imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants to rest primarily on the existence of the race in him at the time of his sin, or on the Realistic conception of Augustine. They are especially earnest in this view when they are answering objections. Owen, for example, in his "Display of Arminianism," says that the first ground of the imputation of Adam's sin is, that "we were *then* in him and parts of him." (Owen's Works, Vol. V. p. 130.) He, not less than Baxter, distinguishes between the ground of the imputation of Christ's righteousness and of Adam's sin. "Sin and punishment," he says, "though they are sometimes separated by his [God's] mercy, pardoning the one, and so not inflicting the other, yet *never* by his justice inflicting the latter where the former is not; sin imputed by itself alone without an inherent guilt, was never punished in any but Christ; the unsearchableness of God's love and justice, in laying the iniquity of us all upon him who had no sin, is an exception to that general rule he walketh by, in his dealing with the posterity of Adam." (Ib. p. 127.) The plain sense of the term "guilt" in this passage is enough to show the groundlessness of the statement that its uniform and established meaning in theology is "exposedness to punishment." He says, and quotes Augustine to confirm him, that when Adam sinned "we were then all one man, we were all in him, and had no other will but his; so that though that be extrinsecal unto us, considered as particular persons, yet it is *intrinsic*, as we are all parts of one common nature; as in him we sinned so in him we had a will of sinning." (Ib. p. 127.) He says that if, without any sinfulness of our own, "God should impute the sin of Adam unto us," it could not be "reconciled with that rule of his proceeding in justice with the sons of men, 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die;' which clearly granteth an impunity to all not tainted with sin." (Ib. p. 129.)

From these historical facts it follows that the new doctrine of Imputation cannot derive support from Augustine, or many of the other eminent theologians of the church, and must stand or fall, as common sense may decide it to consist or not to consist with the teachings of the Bible and the rectitude of the Divine character.

that the foreknowledge of God depends on his purposes, or that his purposes depend on his foreknowledge; and held that foreknowledge is an independent attribute or a part of the Divine omniscience.

"God, knowing that He will make the free agent, knoweth also that this agent will freely sin; in all which the futurity is nothing, nor is any existent cause [i. e. existent, when the event of sin was foreknown] necessary; but only the truth of the proposition would result from the infinite perfection of God's knowledge." (Cath. Theol. B. I. p. 83.)

Man is not made independent of God. "Much less do we take the will from under the power and government of God; for, 1. It could have no self-determining power but of God, one moment. 2. He giveth us governing laws accordingly. 3. And he attaineth all His ends, and fulfilleth all His will, as perfectly in consistence with our power and freedom, as if we had none such at all." (Cath. Theol. B. I. p. 565.)

"This rank and state of free agents is God's own wisely-chosen work in which He is delighted." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 116.)

God can cause the certainty of events without impinging on human freedom. Although Baxter commonly vindicates the doctrine that God can control the existence of sin, by referring to his foreknowledge, there are still several passages in which he asserts that God has caused the *certainty* of events, without causing their *necessity*.

"It is not right to doubt but that God can render the occurrence of an act infallibly certain [infallibiliter futurum reddere] by moral means and by ways unknown to us, without physical predetermination. For if the will has no other liberty except the power of choosing as it does [praeter ipsum velle] then all certain faith and the Christian religion fall to the ground, as has been before amply proved. But if God cannot cause the future certainty [certo futurum reddere] of the free volition of man, divine Providence in the government of the world and the security of His promises, are destroyed. Both which consequences are intolerable. But the question, how God does or can do this, misbecomes us dim-sighted pigmies." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 274.)

It is conceded "that the determination of the will by itself, and God's moral way of determining it (by which He causes the will to determine itself infallibly, and yet without physical determination), is consistent with liberty and formal power to the contrary." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 272.) See also *ib.* p. 288.

How can God prevent Sin? "God could prevent all future sin, if he absolutely willed so to do, either by destroying the world or disabling the sinner, or by withholding his moving influx, or by such a change of his nature as should make him indefectible." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 58.)

§ 2. ABILITY.

"This unhappy CAN is the cannon that battereth our peace and love." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 113.) "This one poor word is the grenade or fire-ball." (Ib. p. 88.) "I tell you, once for all, that the shaming and ending of all the controversies between the Synodists and moderate Arminians (or Jesuits), lieth in the true opening of the ambiguity of this one syllable Can. And unhappy is the church when its pastors have neither skill nor love enough to forbear torturing and distracting it, by one poor ambiguous syllable, not understood by the contenders." (Ib. p. 86.)

WHAT IS NATURAL ABILITY? "Remember that a true power is that by which *we truly can*; and not that faculty which could do this or that, if God would predetermine it, and otherwise cannot; no more than the sun can shine without him." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 74.)

"Is not natural strength or power a thing belonging to man as man which sin destroyeth not and grace restoreth not?" "The soul of every man hath a *true* natural power to repent, believe and love God; and they omit it, not for the want of natural power, but of something else." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 86.)

"This unhappy syllable CAN by its ambiguity is the cause of all our silly quarrels. If by CAN, you mean a physical power or faculty, man can not only do more good than he doth, but he can *repent* and *believe*, who doth not." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 107.)

"If man's will had been made by God such as could not possibly love Him or holiness, it would not have left a man without excuse in judgment, that his enmity was voluntary." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. III. p. 100.)

"A natural power of freely determining itself, both to the choice of God and spiritual good, remains in the will of the unregenerate. For the sinner is free from a fatal predetermination to evil, and from the dominion of created causes over his will, and from the necessity of sinning, imposed in any other way." (Meth. Pars I. c. 15. p. 215.)

Ability is not a mere capacity, without a motive to action. "Man's [involuntary] inclination to felicity, truth and goodness, which is natural, doth continue." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. p. 155.)

"Man's natural faculty itself, besides natural power, hath all these aptitudes to the act. Man hath self-love and a desire of felicity, and an unwillingness and fear of hell and misery, and of all that he knows doth tend to it, as such. He can seek for glory, honor and immortality." He has "Reason to understand what is told him of good and evil in some sort," "conscience to accuse and excuse," "the disgrace of sin," "the fear of the devil," "the prospect of death and immortality;" and "God addeth by his works and word many vehement motives, persuasions and urgent exhortations, examples, mercies and corrections." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 147. See also p. 153.)

"Even in the point of believing, [the will] hath natural power and liberty to act otherwise than it doth, even to turn itself from the act of unbelief to the act of faith. But being indisposed and ill-disposed, it *will not do* that

which it hath a natural self-determining power to do; till God assist it or turn it by his grace." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 97.)

WHAT IS MORAL INABILITY? "He that wanteth not natural force or power, but only a right *disposition* of his will, and so far wanteth it, that none, in his case, do ever change their own acts to good, without more help and power than he hath, is said to be *morally unable* or *impotent*." (Cath. Theol. B. L. p. 37.)

"Ofttimes, in Scripture, by the word 'cannot' is meant only that which a man cannot do without suffering, loss or difficulty. (So 1 Sam. 25: 17, 'He is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him,' i. e. without inconvenience by it.)" "Ofttimes this inconvenience, procuring *unwillingness* is named like *impotency*, and it is said, 'men cannot,' because they will not. (Luke 14: 20, 'I have married a wife and cannot come,' i. e. I will not, because I cannot without inconvenience.)" "And this unwillingness, when it is habitual and prevalent, is what is commonly called *man's moral impotency*, as to believe, love, obey, etc." "That power is morally called *impotency*, which no man ever reduceth to act." (Cath. Theol. B. II. pp. 95, 96.)

"Both habitual and dispositive and actual willingness or unwillingness is not called usually *strength* or power, but will; the will itself hath its proper power to will, for it is a natural faculty; but its habits and acts are better known by the name of willingness or unwillingness than of power. If, therefore, men would do as the Scripture doth, usually express moral habits and acts, by these their best known names, and when we use the terms of power, *can* and *cannot*, would do it so rarely and explainedly as to be understood, that it is nothing but moral *willingness* and *unwillingness* that we mean, it would do much to end all this controversy." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 98.)

WHAT IS MORAL ABILITY? There are many passages in which Baxter asserts that men are not only naturally able but also *morally* able to perform actions which they yet do not perform. The apparent confusion of ideas is obviated by observing that he sometimes uses the term *will*, in the way it is used by the old writers, to denote not only the power of choice but also the tendencies or involuntary inclinations which influence the mind in choosing. When these involuntary inclinations are so excited by a gracious influence toward the right object, that the choice of it is comparatively *easy*, then the mind is sometimes said to be *morally* able to perform the action. Hence, too, in his view, there are different degrees of moral ability. It is obviously important to ascertain his idea of the extent of moral inability, or the effect of sin upon those powers of the mind which lie back of the faculty of choice. This question Baxter answers both in the passages already quoted, which relate to the power of contrary choice, and in those which assert the existence of natural (involuntary) tendencies to happiness and goodness. He is, however, in other places, more explicit:

"This impotence is not a total defect, but weakness of power. And man still retains true power for acting here and now (even without the aid of any other cause)." But this power wants the alacrity and firmness "which render the action certain. It is not prompt and prepared for action, and can abstain from acting. Impotence is the cause (*sine qua non*) of inaction, but not the *necessitating* cause. I say, therefore, that whenever the will does not act, when it ought to act, no necessitating reason for the inaction is to be rendered." "The reason of inaction is finally to be resolved into the will itself." "Sin does not destroy an essential faculty and so destroy the human species;" "nor is every inclination to good, to happiness, to God, to the salvation of the soul, to virtue, lost." "But by means of sin, the active powers may be languid, and the intellect ill-disposed to perceive higher things, and the will disposed or inclined, by evil habits against spiritual and toward sensual good." "No one is good or bad, contrary to his will; but the happiness or misery of every one follows his election or rejection of the means." (Meth. Pars I. c. 7. pp. 215, 216.)

Baxter sometimes uses the word *habit* in the sense of a fixed, voluntary inclination; but frequently, as it is used by the old writers, to denote an excited involuntary principle or inclination. "A habit," he says, "is not only a power to act, but a power to act promptly and easily." It implies a greater likelihood of the act than the term *moral power*.¹ But prior to the existence of a holy "habit," the mind has involuntary inclinations which tend to God and holiness, and give it a true natural power to do right.²

"But habit itself does not necessarily produce an act, although by a natural agency it makes a man incline to the act. Indeed men often act against a habit. But habits are a kind of second nature, and so strongly incline to the act, that they constantly produce it, but do not necessitate it." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 275.)

It is, therefore, plain that in the passages where Baxter asserts that men have grace enough to enable them to perform certain acts which they omit, he refers to *moral* ability. His language is not free from ambiguity, but perhaps his meaning may be thus expressed: Men are morally able to do an action when, from their previous inclinations, it appears to us probable that they will perform it; and when the omission of it costs them a mental struggle. All men have not only the natural power to repent and believe, but they have such grace as confers *moral* ability, and if faithfully used, would lead finally to their conversion and salvation.³

Let us now ascertain the views of Baxter with respect to the Bible and the principal doctrines of Theology.

¹ Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 97. Meth. Pars I. c. 8. p. 202. ² Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 92.

³ Cath. Theol. B. III. p. 133. Meth. Pars III. c. 25.

§ 3. THE BIBLE.

What is the authority of the Bible? The truth and Divine authority of the Scriptures have been abundantly proved. Whatever in the Bible professes to have the sanction of God is worthy of belief; and whatever errors or contradictions may be found, are to be attributed to the mistakes of transcribers, printers or translators.¹ There is nothing in the Bible which is superfluous, and nothing which does not conduce to the well-being of Christianity.² The Bible brings the evidence of its own divinity to the attentive reader: "it shineth by its own light, and it beareth the certain seal of heaven." Yet the perfection of the Scriptures is not absolute but relative to the ends for which they were given, and by their fitness to these ends their value is to be estimated. One part of the Bible may be preferred to another, as it may treat of greater themes, or be furnished with clearer marks of Divine authority, or be the work of a writer who excels in style and method. The imperfections of the biblical authors in knowledge and the art of composition contribute to the perfection of the Revelation; just as the meanness of David's weapons proved that his victory over Goliath was a Divine achievement.³

What is essential to be believed? Baxter makes a careful distinction between faith in the veracity of God and a belief that the doctrines of the Bible are divinely inspired. The former is essential; while one may think that no part of the Scriptures is canonical except the bare announcement of the condition of salvation, and although he is grossly mistaken, he can yet believe and be saved. Hence it is not requisite for ecclesiastical communion that one should subscribe to every verse, chapter or book of the Bible, as canonical; but it is essential that he should credit all the words of God, and especially that he should believe the vital truths of the Christian religion. Men ascribe too much to the Bible when they affirm that it presents no signs of human imperfection, and maintain that we have no greater certainty of the truth of the Christian religion than we have of the truth of "every item of history, genealogy, number or word," and assert that every one who doubts whether a single word is true or was dictated by the Holy Spirit may, with equal reason, doubt the whole Gospel.⁴ "And here," he says, "I must tell you a great and needful truth, which ignorant Christians, fearing to confess, by over-

¹ Meth. Pars III. c. 15. p. 208. Pract. Works, Vol. XX. p. 430.

² Meth. P. III. c. 15. p. 208.

³ Meth. P. III. c. 15. p. 203.

⁴ Meth. Pars III. c. 15. pp. 200, 201.

doing, tempt men to infidelity. The Scripture is like a man's body, where some parts are for the preservation of the rest, and may be maimed without death; the sense is the soul of Scripture and the letters but the body or vehicle."¹

The relation of Reason to Revelation. Baxter discovered no antagonism between Faith and Reason. He would have cordially assented both to the apothegm of Augustine, "crede ut intelligas," and the proud saying of Abelard, "intellige ut credas." For he insists upon a right temper of heart as indispensable for the successful study of religious truth, and also teaches that nothing is to be done or believed without a sufficient reason. We always have sufficient reason for believing a doctrine that is proved to be the testimony of God.²

"They that believe and know not why, or know no sufficient reason to warrant their belief, do take a fancy or an opinion or a dream, for faith. I know that many honest-hearted Christians are unable to dispute for their religion or to give to others a satisfactory account of the reasons of their faith or hope; but yet they have the true apprehension of some solid reasons, in themselves." (Christian Directory, Part I. c. III.)³

Baxter was one of the earliest of the English writers on the proofs of revealed religion, and published the first answer to the treatise "de Veritate" of Lord Herbert, the founder of the English school of Deists. He appreciated the importance of Natural Theology, as furnishing proof alike of the possibility and of the need of a revelation, and as confirming the truths of the Bible. Worthy as are his defences of the external grounds of Christianity, his works on this subject now have their chief value in the force with which they unfold the internal evidences of Christian truth.

§ 4. THE TRINITY.

IS OUR LANGUAGE RESPECTING GOD LITERALLY CORRECT? It is a fundamental principle of Baxter's theology, that the traces of a Trinity may be perceived in every part of the universe. What is dimly discerned in inanimate nature, and seen less faintly in the irra-

¹ Pract. Works, XIX. p. 32.

² Ib. XX. p. 429.

³ The "Christian Directory" is a companion to the "Methodus Theologiae," and treats of Practical Ethics. It was first published in 1673 in a large folio volume, which would have been still larger had not the author fortunately been absent from his library during the time of its composition. It is an able treatise on Casuistry and ranks with the "Ductor Dubitantium" of Jeremy Taylor. To this inferior department of moral science, little has been contributed since the time of Baxter.

tional animals, is more clearly recognized in the soul of man, which is the image of the Creator. From what we see around us and in ourselves, we derive language to express our conceptions of the Deity. But this language is tropical and must not be literally interpreted.

"All our terms concerning God are plainly metaphorical. For although the thing expressed is primarily in the Deity, yet the notion which expresses it, is primarily adapted to creatures; and by it something created is commonly signified. And since we must speak improperly or metaphorically concerning the Deity, no where else than from the human spirit, can our conceptions and metaphorical modes of speech be borrowed. Nor is any other natural mirror known to us, in which we can more clearly see God. Nor is the soul vainly called by God Himself, the image of God." (Meth. Pars I. c. 2. p. 218. Also Practical Works, Vol. XIX. p. 576.)

WHAT IS KNOWN OF THE TRINITY? Looking upon the human soul as upon a mirror, Baxter finds "in God, who is an infinite and undivided Spirit," a Trinity of "essentialities" or "active principles;" viz. Active or Vital Power, Intellect and Will [Potentia-Actus, Intellectus, Voluntas]. These principles are the ground of a threefold, eternal, immanent act in the Deity; viz. 1. Vital Activity or "Self-living" ["Sibi Vita vel vivens"]. 2. Self-knowing ["Intellectus se Intelligens"]. 3. "Self-loving" ["Voluntas se Amans"]. These, too, are respectively the eternal ground of a *transitive* act, and so of God's relation, 1. to the existence of things or to nature; 2. to the order of things, and to grace; 3. to the end of things and the glory of man. These principles are the Trinity of persons, Father, Word and Holy Spirit. Hence, in the Scriptures, power is emphatically ascribed to the Father, wisdom to the Son, and the communicative love of God to the Spirit. Hence, also, by His eternal act of self-knowledge, God is said to generate the Son; and as the communications of Divine Love are ordered by Wisdom and Power, the Holy Spirit is said to proceed from the Father and the Son. "We shall be as loth to say that the Father or the Holy Ghost was incarnate for us, or died for us, or mediates for us, as that the power or love of God doth the works which belong to His wisdom." "As in man's soul, the power, intellect, will [posse, velle, scire] are not three parts of the soul, it being the whole soul *quae potest, quae intelligit et quae vult*," so "the whole Deity is power, the whole is understanding, and the whole is will." [See "Methodus," Pars I. c. 2. pp. 36, 37, 34, 28. Practical Works, Vol. XIX. pp. 62, 63, 576 et seq. Vol. XX. p. 439. Vol. XXI. p. 307 et seq.]

"I hold it certain that we are to conceive (though imperfectly) of God,

as *triple* [tripliciter]: 1. in respect to his vital-active, intellectual and volitive power; 2. in his triple immanent act; 3. in his transitive, external [ad extra] [or emanent] act, as an agent. It is certain that in the Holy Scriptures, the works of power are, in some way, most frequently ascribed to the Father, the works of wisdom to the Son, the works of love to the Holy Spirit. Efficiency of the works is ascribed to the Father, direction of the works to the Son, and perfection of the works to the Holy Spirit; creation is ascribed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit. And so, eminently, the Father is the author of nature, the Son of remedy [medicinae], the Holy Spirit of salvation, and all alike of glory." (Meth. Pars I. c. 2. p. 121.)

Whether the Trinity of the Divine Being be anything *more* than is above described, Baxter professed himself unable either to affirm or deny. "And what mortal man is able to say whether the distinction of persons be greater or less than this?" (Prac. Works, XXI. p. 312.) If it be more, the truth is still rendered credible by the manner in which it is shadowed forth in all the works of God. Nature is at least a ladder by which we may climb upwards to a knowledge of the Deity.

"There are some who do not presume to define the *Personality*, whether it be anything absolute, a power, an immanent act, a mode of existence, a relation, a property, or something formal, and admit that no formal and proper conception of the Divine Personality (as well as none of the Divine Essence or of any essential Divine Attribute), is possible to the human intellect. That these agree with me, I do not deny [minime diffiteor]. (Meth. P. I. c. 2. p. 123.)

"That the Trinity of Persons is the same as that of Essentialities [or active principles], I have never verbally or mentally affirmed; I think that it cannot be affirmed." (Ib. p. 121.)

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL TO BE BELIEVED? Soundness of belief does not consist in the use of any particular words, as Person, Relation, Generation or Procession. (Meth. P. I. c. 2. p. 119.)

"The reasons of Rada, by which he decides that it is not heretical to consider the Persons absolute Attributes, I deem to be entirely valid." (Ib. p. 122.)

"Whoever says, with proper reverence, that the third Trinity [Father, Son and Spirit] is the same Trinity [of principles or active powers], presented most clearly to the apprehension of men [hominibus explicatissimam], and in the sense, last and best known by us, is a Trinity of persons, as appearing in their special, visible works; whoever says this, will not be accused of heresy by me." (Meth. P. I. c. 2. p. 37. Pract. Works, Vol. XXI. p. 313.)

"He will be saved, who so believes in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three persons in one Essence, as to give and devote himself wholly to God the Father, Creator (Lord, King, Friend) Redeemer and

Sanctifier, and repose in Him his entire confidence and hope; and this is saving faith in the Trinity." (ib. p. 122.)¹

Baxter's theory of the Trinity may be in part accounted for by his fondness for the scholastic writers and his familiar acquaintance with their works. The history of the doctrine which he gives, at once evinces his profound research and discovers the sources whence he derived his opinions. The view of Augustine tended to Sabellianism; and the well known comparison which he had made between the persons of the Trinity, and the memory, intelligence and will, may be regarded as the key-note to the principal speculations of the schoolmen. They reasoned of the nature of the Trinity from the analogy of the human mind. The common view among the theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Anselm, Abelard, Hugo a St. Victore, Thomas Aquinas, Alexander of Hales, Raymund Lull), is like that of Baxter; and, indeed, the doctrine of Abelard which represented the three persons as the power, wisdom and love of the Divine Being "became, on the whole, current in the middle ages."² In later times, similar modes of reasoning were adopted by Melancthon, and to a certain extent by Grotius. But Baxter has gone beyond every other writer, in the minuteness with which he has carried the system of trichotomy through every form of existence and every department of science. Groundless and diverse from the biblical view, as such speculations may be, they have not been without their value in counteracting a tendency toward Tritheism, which has more than once revealed itself in the history of the church.

§ 5. DECREES.

The following are the leading opinions which are presented, with endless distinctions, in his prolix discussions of this topic.³

¹ This baptismal formula appears to have been the result of Baxter's search for a symbol on which Christians ought to unite in love and communion. He frequently declares that this formula is the substance of our religion; and that the Apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer and the Decalogue are a summary expression of the belief, the desire and hope, and the duty of the Christian. (Pref. to Cath. Theol. Works, Vol. XXI. p. 265.)

² Hagenbach's Hist. of Doctrines. Vol. I. p. 478. Neander's Church History, Vol. IV. pp. 457—465.

³ One cannot forbear to sympathize with those who deplored or smiled at Baxter's tedious distinctions. No man could divide a hair with so exquisite nicety. His fondness for logomachy often injured his cause. At the Savoy Conference he was pitted against Gunning, afterwards Bishop, first of Chichester and then of

The decrees of God are His eternal purposes. They are made in accordance with infinite wisdom. God foresees the results of all His possible actions. Yet, in the view of Baxter, the mode of the Divine prescience of actual events is to us inscrutable, and therefore the question, whether His foreknowledge is dependent on His purposes, is beyond the reach of our faculties.¹ The decree of God with respect to sin is simply a purpose not forcibly to prevent what he foresees will, without His efficient prevention, certainly occur. To the positive existence of sin, according to the view of Baxter, no specific decree is required;² and in his view, the assertion of such a decree is in the highest degree objectionable,³ since with the term decree he associated a preference on the part of the Deity that the event decreed, rather than its opposite, should occur. And it was a principle of his theology, as we have seen, that God prefers holiness to sin, in themselves considered and all things considered. The purposes of God have primary reference to his own actions.

ELECTION. "The true meaning and scope of the doctrine of election is, that God, the absolute Lord and Benefactor of all, does not distribute his gifts equally, but, as it pleases His most wise will [sapientissimæ voluntati], gives to some more and greater, to others fewer and inferior blessings. To some He gives more grace, to the end that they may be certainly saved and happy; but to some less grace — such as is merely necessary or sufficient (commonly so called) — but which He yet foresaw they would abuse to their destruction. And so it must be said that from eternity He has decreed that these blessings shall be distributed with the inequality with which He has actually distributed them." (Meth. Pars I. c. 2. p. 52.)

The order of decrees. In the order of time, the purposes of God are contemporaneous; and to inquire respecting any other order than

Ely. Burnet says: "Baxter and he spent some days in much logical arguing, to the diversion of the town, who thought here were a couple of fencers engaged in disputes, that could never be brought to an end or have any good effect." (Burnet's "Own Times," Vol. I. pp. 283, 284.) The town were probably correct in their view. Yet, it is needless to say, Baxter was never a quibbling sophist, but was ever actuated by high moral aims. Often he alludes to some question as useless or impious, and grieves that it was ever raised; but for the sake of concord "a few necessary distinctions must be made," and then he goes on with them through many a weary page. With propriety he has been styled the last of the schoolmen. He seemed to think that men wanted only an exhibition of the truth to be convinced; and he would hardly have deemed an argument hopeless even with those whom the poet describes as on a "hill retired," reasoning high

"Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate."

¹ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. pp. 24, 26, etc.

² Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. p. 43. P. III. p. 72, etc. ³ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. p. 43.

that of their execution is useless, if not impious. The ultimate end of God is His own glory or complacency in His glory. He predestinates men to destruction "only on the foresight of their wilful sin. The election of men to salvation is absolute and not conditioned on His foreknowledge of their repentance."¹

§ 6. REDEMPTION.

Who is the Redeemer? A human soul and a human body constitute the human nature of Christ; this with the Divine nature of the eternal Word constitutes the person of the Mediator. The mode of this hypostatic union is incomprehensible. There are in Christ two principles of intelligence as well as of choice, the acts of which are separate; but since the Divine nature moves the human faculties as subordinate, the act of the human nature is also the act of the Divine nature, while not every act of the Divine nature is also the act of the human nature, "for the Divine nature can do what is above and beyond the human."² "So many diverse opinions have arisen about the person and natures of Christ, that we ought to beware of rashness in forming opinions and of a rash condemnation of those who differ from us."³

What is the origin of redemption? "It must not be supposed that a covenant, properly so called, was formed between the Father and the eternal Logos. But since it was certain, that some things were to be done by the Son, and some things were to be given to the Son, as incarnated, and some things were to be bestowed on men by His grace, theologians often call these divine decrees or volitions, by the name of covenant. But observe that these allegorical modes of speaking are not to be too often, or generally, used, lest they be mistaken for literal forms of speech. And when controversies grow out of them, we should revert to proper expressions." (Meth. P. III. c. 1. pp. 9, 10.)

Redemption springs from the love of God, and impious [nefandus] is the idea of those who attribute mildness and lenity only to the Son.⁴

Did Christ suffer the punishment of sin? In the first place, Baxter defines the term. Punishment, in its generic sense, is natural evil inflicted on account of moral evil. The primary and most common [famosissimus] meaning of the word is natural evil inflicted on the delinquent himself. But punishment, in a secondary and analogical sense, signifies the natural evil which, not directly, but mediately follows moral evil. This may occur in two cases: (1) where

¹ Cath. Theol. B. L P. I. p. 123.

² Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 31.

³ Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 36.

⁴ Meth. P. III. c. 1. pp. 9, 10.

the sufferer has a natural connection with the offender, as in the instance of slaves who suffer for the faults of their master, or children for the faults of their parents; and (2) where suffering follows in accordance with a voluntary stipulation of the sufferer. The latter is called vicarious punishment.

Christ was not a sinner, and therefore in the usual meaning of the term, he was not punished. "Christ was not reckoned a sinner;" "for God does not judge falsely;" he was not punished, in the analogical sense of the term, for the faults of parents. He suffered vicariously, and therefore only in the last signification of the word can it be said that he was punished. "The sufferings of Christ were a natural evil, occasioned and remotely caused by the sins of the human race, and proximately caused by the obligation of a stipulation and proper consent of the sufferer."¹

Were the sins of men imputed to Christ? In its primary and most proper signification, the term relates to "guilt of the fault" [reatum culpæ]; and therefore sin is not, in this sense, imputed to Christ. But in an improper sense of the word, it can be said that our sins are imputed to Christ, "as they were the cause whence sprung the necessity of his suffering. But this phrase [viz. imputation of sins to Christ], however well it may be explained, though it can be tolerated, is yet improper, and is therefore not to be used too often, or in controversies, where there is need of great clearness."²

"The forensic meaning [of terms], when God is the judge, is their true and reasonable, and not their false meaning." "Christ did not suffer punishment on account of his own sins; therefore he was not reckoned a sinful person." (Meth. Pars III. c. 1. p. 47.)

"Christ chose and consented to be made a sacrifice for sinners; to a certain extent, he was our surety (sponsor poenarum)." "Our sins were the remote cause of the sufferings of Christ. For if we had not, by means of our sin, become exposed to punishment [poenarum reatum incidissemus], it could not have been in any way necessary for Christ to suffer punishment, as the means of liberating us." "In the proper sense of Imputation, not *our* sin but his own is imputed to Christ; not by God, but by men; not by the good but by the wicked; not truly but falsely." (Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 47.)

Did Christ die for all men? Christ died for all, but not for all equally.³ There are some benefits, as faith and repentance, which only a part of mankind actually possess; and hence we conclude that Christ did not determine that his death should eventually put all men

¹ Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 38.

² Meth. Pars III. c. 1. Determ. 7.

³ Meth. P. III. c. 1. pp. 55, 56.

in possession of them.¹ And yet he did intend and decree that the gift of them should be offered to all. Christ is the Redeemer of the human race and suffered for the sins of the human race;² the death of Christ is "in itself a remedy sufficient to profit all; but if it be not taken it will not heal."³ In consequence of his death, on the condition of faith and repentance, it is true that justification, adoption, and a right to celestial glory are given to every man. Innumerable favors which "tend to produce repentance" are granted to all. To these benefits, there is added such assistance of the Holy Spirit as confers mediate or immediate [moral] power for the right use of them.⁴

What is the matter of the Atonement? The lofty dignity of Christ and his sinless obedience increase the value of his sufferings.⁵ His sufferings were not the same in kind and degree as are due to all sinners, nor is their value to be estimated by their severity. They were chiefly spiritual, and arose from his deep sense of God's displeasure at sin.⁶ His humiliation forms a part of his atoning sacrifice.

What is the formal nature of the Atonement? Christ did not literally fulfil the precept of the Law for us, "by representing our persons, as a man's servant pays his master's debt, by his command."⁷ Nor did he literally bear the penalty for sinners. "The punishment of one is not the punishment of another." If the precept had been fulfilled, "we should not be bound to obedience;" if the penalty had been endured, "we should need no pardon."⁸ It is more correct to say that "he suffered for our sake and in our stead," and "unless he had suffered we must have suffered."

What is meant by the satisfaction of Christ? Satisfaction has respect remotely to the precept of the law and proximately to its threatening. The punishment of the sinner himself is satisfaction for the violation of the precept; the substituted punishment [i. e. suffering] of Christ is directly satisfaction on account of our release from punishment [impunitatem], and remotely on account of our disobedience.⁹

His sufferings render satisfaction, because they demonstrate the justice, wisdom and mercy of God, and enable Him to attain the ends of government in a better way than by executing the law and de-

¹ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 53.

² Meth. Pars III. c. 1. p. 42.

³ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I. p. 118.

⁴ Meth. P. II. p. 53.

⁵ Meth. P. III. c. 1. pp. 39, 40.

⁶ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. pp. 40, 41.

⁷ Ib. p. 38.

⁸ Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 47.

⁹ Ib. p. 48.

stroying the world.¹ They express the Divine hatred of sin and so repress any contempt of the lawgiver and the law, and are, moreover, wonderfully adapted to declare to the world God's love and compassion. Fitness to accomplish these ends is the principal ground of the satisfaction.² The punishment [i. e. suffering] of Christ is said to be meritorious in procuring the remission of sins, since it is the means voluntarily applied to attain the aforesaid ends.³

Baxter often styles Christ our Surety or "sponsor poenarum." The word surety denotes one who undertakes to satisfy a creditor, when the debtor cannot pay. "But," he observes, "all this similitude of a creditor and debtor is to be limited in the application, according to the great difference of sin and debt, which will infer a great diversity in the consequents."⁴

§ 7. REGENERATION.

WHAT IS COMMON GRACE? In interpreting the writings of Baxter, it is necessary to consider his use of the term Grace. After the apostasy of the race, everything which they have, except their bare existence, is a gift, bestowed on them by the mercy of God. Hence, even man's natural power to do right (as it has been defined on a preceding page), when he is placed in the ordinary circumstances of life, is sometimes spoken of as a result of Divine grace, or as a gracious power. Hence, too, not only the supernatural influences of the Holy Spirit, but also all the arrangements of Providence, which have a tendency to win men from their sins and lead them to holiness, are the gifts of grace. Such gifts are bestowed on all men as give them, beyond their natural power, a moral ability or a facility for the performance of certain acts of duty.⁴ If they perform these acts, they will acquire a moral power or promptitude for doing other and higher duties, until they have attained salvation and perfect holiness. Those who are not saved, must not simply neglect, but must positively *resist* merciful influences.⁵

¹ Cath. Theol. B. II. P. I. p. 41. Works, Vol. XX.

² Meth. P. III. c. 1. p. 49.

³ Ib. p. 38.

⁴ That men may believe this, he exhorts them "to turn their eyes a little from Pelagius, and everything else that useth to blind disputers with prejudice." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 156, 101.)

⁵ On this subject, as we have before hinted, Baxter may not always be consistent with himself. He occasionally affirms that man has power, through grace, to do some acts which are preparatory to repentance, and employs such phraseology as would seem to imply that man has no *present* power to do more. Yet

Sufficient grace is given to all. "By sufficient grace is meant that without which, the thing could not occur, and with which, it could be done. It is what is necessary and sufficient to produce the act; but not sufficient to render the event actually necessary or certain." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 265.)

"If they [men] talk only of passive or obediential power, and say 'man can believe because God can make him believe,' and so denominate man able to do that, which they mean God is able to make him do, this is to play with words." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 98.)

"All men have some helps and grace, in its kind sufficient to enable them to seek salvation, and God will not forsake them until they forsake him." (Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 133.)

What is special grace? "Because no one would believe or have penitence without the aid of the Holy Spirit, plenitude of power is given to the Redeemer, to give the Holy Spirit to whom He chooses, and in whatever degree He pleases. But it is the wise design of the Redeemer not to give to men the same degrees of aid; but to vary the degree sometimes according to the preparation and receptivity of men, and sometimes only according to his good pleasure; and, therefore, to give to some such degrees of aid as will efficiently work in them repentance and faith."

"It is given to the elect not only to be able to believe [*posse credere*] but also to believe." (Meth. Pars III. c. 25. p. 274.)

Is grace resistible? "(1) Most of the disputants confess that the Divine working is not such as physically necessitates the human volition; or takes away the simultaneous power to the contrary [*simultatem potentiae ad contrarium*]. (2) With respect to the *force* of the means, almost all but the followers of Hobbes [*Hobbianos*] confess that it is not such as forces or physically necessitates the will." (Meth. P. III. c. 25. pp. 283, 286. Also Cath. Theol. B. II pp. 136, 138.)

Has the truth an agency in regeneration? Since man has the same essential faculties which he had before his apostasy, the spirit of God does not add to the mind any new faculty.¹ Faith and repentance are the acts of the natural faculties. To procure the performance of these acts, certain means, as preaching and reading, are appointed, which have an inherent aptitude to the end.¹ The Divine influence is in harmony with the nature of the mind, and "the word is a true cause which works with an efficiency subordinate to the final cause of

his strong doctrine of Natural Ability, which with him, as we have seen, is complete power for the performance of all duty, would require him in all these passages to signify a moral ability. That every man has full power, in some way, either mediately or immediately, to repent and be saved, is his unequivocal assertion. And to the possession of this power he links personal responsibility for declining the invitations of the Gospel. See Meth. P. III. c. 25. p. 291. Cath. Theol. B. II. p. 98.

¹ Cath. Theol. B. I. pp. 40, 41. B. II. p. 165.

conversion.”¹ “It is most probable that God overcometh moral impotency and giveth moral power by moral means and operations.”

The order of Divine operation in regeneration. “It is most probable that He first rouses the mind by a certain awakening motion. 2. That He shows the *probability* of Divine truth. 3. That from this He excites some fear of punishment and desire of escaping it, and at length some little hope. 4. That then before, by His Spirit, He renders the act of true faith and penitence morally possible, He gives a power of believing, inclined to the act (as the seed of faith). 5. And that at the same time, He excites the act of faith. 6. And that, finally, by frequent acts and the influence of the Holy Spirit, He produces a habit of faith, hope and love.

Who is the author of regeneration? This topic is illustrated by a comparison of Paul and Nero. “Faith and unbelief are the constitutive, differencing causes.” “Quest. 1. What is the cause (efficient) of Nero’s unbelief? Ans. His own will or wicked heart. Quest. 2. What is the efficient cause of Paul’s faith? Ans. 1. The principal efficient is God, by His Spirit. 2. The meritorious cause is Christ. 3. The chief ministerial efficient is Christ in giving the Spirit to work it. 4. The instrumental efficient is the Gospel. 5. The immediate efficient is Paul; for it is he that believeth and not God.”

“This prerequisite disposition [of man] and the concurrence of man’s will, is only the use of a power, freely before given of God, with all necessary helps to use it. And therefore that God is from first to last the first cause of all that is good in man, though not the only cause, and that of himself, man can do nothing.” (Cath. Theol. B. II. pp. 181, 183.)

“Lastly, forget not that as man is not moved as a stone, but governed as a moral agent, and as the wonderful changes by motion in the world are made *recipiendo ad modum recipientium*, by the diversity of receptive dispositions, which are no efficient causes of what they receive; so man can and must do somewhat, yea *much*, under God, to the due receptivity of the Divine Influx; not without God, nor by any power, not freely given him of God; but by a power which he may or may not use.” “And when God giveth man not only the gold if he will open his hand, and the meat if he will open his mouth, or not turn away and spit it out, and also giveth him all his vital power, by which he can do this, if he will, and also *can will it*, and giveth him both freedom to use this power, and manifold persuasions and helps to use it; all this must not be reproached as no grace, nor the world instructed in ingratitude, by them that should preach that Gospel of Christ which makes gratitude the universal complexion of all our duties, which must give life and beauty to them all.” (End of the Discussion on Grace, Cath. Theol. B. II. pp. 196, 197.)

Do all, who are regenerated, persevere in holiness? On this subject Baxter has written largely. He held that all the elect are kept by

¹ Meth. P. III. pp. 292, 293. Baxter appears to use the terms Regeneration and Conversion as interchangeable.

the agency of the Holy Spirit from falling into fatal sin. But the question whether any but those who are elected to be saved, are truly converted, he seems to have been unable fully to decide. He affirms that the authority neither of Augustine, nor Prosper, nor Fulgentius, nor of the church generally for a thousand years after Christ, can be adduced to sustain the doctrine of universal Perseverance. At one time he avowed his belief in the doctrine,¹ but in the "Catholic Theology" he inclines to the view that "strong Christians" persevere, while Christians, weak in virtue, sometimes fall. "It is confessed," he says, "that this point is no article of our creed, nor is an agreement in it necessary to church communion and Christian love, but difference in it must be accounted tolerable."²

It was a favorite belief of Baxter that the number of the regenerate is not limited to those who profess a belief in the Christian religion. "As the sun," he says, "sendeth some light to the world, before it riseth and is seen itself, so doth Christ send many excellent gifts of His grace to those that knew him not as incarnate." It appeared to him not improbable that some, besides nominal Christians, even some among the heathen, "do truly love God and holiness above the pleasures, profits and honors of this world." The censures, of which this opinion was the cause, occasionally drew from him a sarcastic retort. "Those," he remarks, "that teach the church that it is a certain truth, that no one in the world, infant or aged, is saved from hell-fire, but Christians only, and that this is not only certain to such great understandings as their own, but must be so to all true Christians, do but discover that they overvalue their own understandings, and that siding hath contracted their thoughts and charity into a sinful narrowness, and that the opinion of men, counted orthodox, prevaileth more with them than the evidence of truth, and I think that they are to be numbered with those, that by overdoing do dangerously undermine the Christian faith."³

¹ In his tract on Perseverance, 1657.

² Cath. Theol. B. III. p. 217. B. I. P. II. p. 116.

³ Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 49. It was said of Baxter, by one who knew him, that he was "sparingly facetious;" and satire certainly was not his usual weapon. But there was a class of persons in his time to whom he shows little mercy and whom he describes "as those who are so very wise in their own eyes as hardly to suspect anything to be an error which they have long held, and who build much of their religion and theological reputation in adhering to the opinions of those whose communion they think most honoreth them, and who, out of a blind zeal for that which they count orthodox, will presently, without impartial consideration or friendly debate, magisterially pass their judgment among those that reverence them, and backbite those that they cannot confute."

§ 8. JUSTIFICATION.

Baxter's view of Justification is best learned by observing his doctrine of the Covenants. The Divine constitution, which was originally established with man, embraced two parts, the Law and its Sanctions; and as it contained a conditional promise, it may be called a Covenant.¹ Neither the legal precept nor the threat of punishment was annulled by transgression.¹ By the law all are condemned.² The Covenant of Grace is the promise of God, made in consequence of the work of Christ, that all who will repent of their sins shall be saved. We wish to ascertain the nature of the right [jus] to salvation, which is acquired by those who fulfil the prescribed condition. It is not derived from our obedience, either actual or supposed, to the original law; nor is it founded on the fact that God judged Christ to be the legal person of the sinner; for such a judgment would not be true.³

"To say that Adam's Law meant '*Do this by thyself or by Christ, and thou shalt live,*' is a human fiction, not found in Scripture, confounding the law of innocency with the Gospel; and to say that the New Covenant maketh us one person with Christ, and then the law of Adam doth justify us, is a double error. We are not reputed one person with Christ; nor doth the first covenant justify any but the person that performeth it." (Cath. Theol. B. II. P. II. p. 62.)

"The disputes whether it be Christ's Divine, his habitual, his active or his passive righteousness, that is made ours to our justification, seemeth to be but the offspring of the error of the undue sense of Christ's personating or *representing* us in His righteousness; and the parcelling out of the uses and effects (that one is imputed to us instead of habitual righteousness, another instead of actual, and the third pardoneth our sins), is from the same false supposition. It is well that they suppose not that his Divine righteousness is imputed to our Deification." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 42.)⁴

The covenant of redemption, in the view of Baxter, is a figurative representation of the Divine purposes.⁵ And our whole right to salvation is derived from the gracious promise of God, who, on the ground of Christ's atoning work, publishes the offer of pardon, and freely justifies the believer.

"And so [Christ] is the true meritorious Cause of all. That Sacrifice and Obedience, Righteousness and Merit, which are directly given to God, for man, by [the] performance of Christ's undertaking, may yet be consequentially said to be given unto man; in that it was given to God for man, and

¹ Meth. P. II. c. 2.

² Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 69.

³ Cath. Theol. B. II. P. II. p. 66. B. I. P. II. p. 75.

⁴ See Meth. P. III. c. 27. p. 308.

⁵ Meth. P. III. c. 1. pp. 9, 10.

in that the benefits merited were given to man ; and so *relatively*, as to those benefits, the Sacrifice, Obedience, Righteousness and Merit may be said to be given unto us." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 42.)

The foregoing passage indicates the only sense in which Baxter would allow the doctrine of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness. He contends that the faith of the Christian is imputed for his justification, not however as a meritorious cause.¹ Though he employs different phraseology, he seems to have held substantially the view of the atonement and of justification which has been taught by the New England theologians.

§ 9. CHRISTIAN VIRTUE.

Men have no virtue which deserves a legal reward. It is folly to divide the praise of a good act between God and man ; for while the whole is due to God, a part is due to man, since man holds his powers in subordination to God, and has nothing but what he received. All Christians have an imperfect righteousness.²

"He that is no cause of any good work is no Christian, but a damnable wretch, and worse than any wicked man I know in the world. And he that is a cause of it [i. e. of a good work] must not be denied falsely to be a cause of it; nor a saint denied to be a saint, upon a false pretence of self-denial." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. pp. 73, 74.)

What is holy faith? "This Gospel covenant is the Christian religion." "It is a true description of justifying and saving faith, that it is such an assent to the Gospel, as produces a trustful [fiducialem] consent to this covenant." (Meth. Pars III. c. 8. p. 95. Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 82.)

"When faith is spoken of as a *virtue*, it always necessarily includes an act of the will. For the prime seat of morality is the will, and nothing is good but what is voluntary. To choose freely, or to place confidence in the fidelity of some one, is the moral form of faith. Therefore holy faith always includes an act of the intellect and of the will; because it is in the highest sense, moral and voluntary." (Meth. Pars III. c. 27. p. 326.)

"As Christ, as Mediator, is the summary means and way of bringing man home to his Creator; so faith in Christ is a mediating grace to work in us the love of God." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 91; also B. I. P. II. p. 82.)

The act of faith precedes the habit. "God acts upon everything according to its nature." "But acquired habits follow very many acts; therefore infused habits follow at least one act. It is quite probable that, in the case of adults, by means of the word, through His vivifying and illuminating influence, He first moves the mind for the purpose of eliciting [ad elicendum] the first act of faith; and that from this, a habit is produced." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 84.)

¹ Meth. P. III. c. 27. p. 311.

² Cath. Theol. B. I. P. I 73.

What is repentance? 1. In its narrower sense, "the word repentance signifieth only the aversion of the soul from evil, by sorrow and change of mind." 2. "Repentance is sometimes taken comprehensively for the whole conversion of a sinner to God," "and is the same thing as faith, in the [its] larger sense, but expressed under another formal notion."

Distinction between faith and repentance. "As man's mind is not so happy as to conceive of all things that are one, by a single conception; so we are not so happy in our language as to have words enough to express things entirely by one name, but we must have several words to express our inadequate conceptions by. And so that is called repentance, as the soul's motion from the *terminus a quo*, which is called sometimes faith or affiance, and sometimes love, from the motion of the soul to the *terminus ad quem*, though the *motus* be the same. But when faith and repentance are distinguished as several parts of the condition of the new covenant, the common sense is, that repentance signifieth the conversion of the soul from sin and idols to God, as God, which is, or includeth, faith in God; and faith signifieth specially faith in Christ as the mediator and way to God. And so [in this use of the terms] faith is below repentance as the means of it." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. pp. 83, 84.)

Holy love. The first holy act involves an exercise of love; but a man is not so properly said to love God, until he has trusted in Him for salvation, and love has become "the fixed habit or employment of the soul." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 84.)

Yet "no faith, no fear, no obedience, no praise, no suffering, is further accepted of God, and a part of true holiness, nor will prove our salvation than it participateth of predominant love to God." (Cath. Theol. B. I. P. II. p. 92.)

"The bellows of faith kindling love, and love working by holy obedience, patience, mortification, gratitude and praise, is the substance of all true religion." (Ib. p. 91.)

§ 10. ESCHATOLOGY.

Whether the sensitive principle ["*anima sensitiva*"] is a faculty of the thinking mind or distinct from it, is undetermined. Death does not annihilate the soul, or divide it into parts, or cause it to lose any of its essential powers. The mind does not give up its activity, nor does it lose its individuality and become absorbed in an all-pervading Spirit; nor is it transformed into any other creature, either of the same or of a different species. The souls of the redeemed, at the moment of death, are introduced by angels into the presence of Christ, and dwell forever in heaven. The souls of the wicked enter upon a state of hopeless and endless suffering; for as the period of probation, and with it the mutable state of man, close with the present life, the destiny of all is then irrevocably fixed.¹

¹ Meth. Pars IV. c. 3. p. 397.

"The union of the rational soul with the body which has been formed anew, is the Resurrection."¹ Baxter indulged in curious speculations on the mode of the resurrection. He conjectures, that the vital principle ["*anima vegetativa*"] is pure, ethereal fire, and that while a portion of this fire adheres to the perishing body, another portion is indissolubly connected with the mind, and forms a spiritual organism. The subtle flame which invests the soul has only to touch the dust, and the body is restored to its pristine life and proportions.²

The Resurrection is followed by the General Judgment. Whether there will be any change in the place of lost souls, after this event, is unknown; but their pains will be aggravated. The sources of their sufferings are not all revealed; but among them are probably outward fire and darkness, joined with the torment of evil passions and remorse of conscience.³

Baxter held that the doctrines of immortality and a future state of retribution are evident by the light of nature.⁴ By arguments drawn from the nature of the soul, as an indestructible substance, its superior powers, its aspirations after happiness, and especially from its capacity of knowing and enjoying God, he endeavored to prove that it is immaterial and everlasting. His belief, which was confirmed by the common consent of mankind to the doctrine, also derived support from the tales of celestial apparitions.⁵ He argued the necessity of the endless punishment of the wicked from the justice of God as a moral Governor. An evil, so odious and dangerous as that of sin, is not to be endured under the government of God, without an adequate demonstration of His justice, and a vindication of the Divine Law from contempt. And when the penalty has been threatened, the veracity of God is pledged for its execution. In a remedial system even, His wisdom and goodness require Him to express His hatred of sin by inflicting the most severe sufferings upon the incorrigible.⁶

We have endeavored to state the opinions of Baxter. In a subsequent Number, we design to present to our readers an estimate of his *Theology and Philosophy*.

¹ Meth. Pars IV, c. 5, p. 384.

² Ib. p. 390. Pract. Works, Vol. XXI. p. 447.

³ Meth. P. IV, c. 6, pp. 394—396.

⁴ Ib. c. 4, p. 380. Pract. Works, Vol. XVIII.

⁵ Ib. XVIII p. 284.

⁶ Ib. c. 6, p. 393. XXI. pp. 95—115, 320.