

ARTICLE IV.

THEOLOGY OF DR. EMMONS.

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[Concluded from No. XXVI. p. 280.]

With this simple indication of his opinions on these topics, we proceed to a condensed statement of his views respecting

§ 9. *Man.*

What was his original state? "God made man upright." This, according to Dr. Emmons, means more than that God formed his body and gave him power to walk erect. It has special reference to the mind and heart. Nor does it comprehend the whole idea to say that God gave Adam all the powers of a free moral agent and thus qualified him to become holy. He entirely disagreed with Dr. Taylor of England, who affirmed, 'That it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of virtue, that it should be concreated with any person; because, if so, it must be an act of God's absolute power, without our knowledge or concurrence. To say that God not only endowed Adam with a capacity of being righteous; but moreover that righteousness and true holiness were created with him, or wrought into his nature, at the same time he was made, is to affirm a contradiction, or what is inconsistent with the nature of righteousness.'¹ By no means, replies Dr. Emmons; for all that is meant by God's making man upright is, that he willed him to exercise his powers of moral agency aright. God chose that Adam should come into existence a perfect man in respect of bodily organization and mental endowment, and that he should commence his being by loving his Creator with his whole heart and soul. This is what is meant by predicating uprightness of him at his creation.

"Uprightness belongs to the heart, and gives a man his moral character."² Man is the living image of the living God, in whom is displayed more of the divine nature and glory, than in all the works and creatures of God upon earth."³

Dr. Emmons had no doubt that God *might* have made Adam upright, in this exalted sense. He believed that he *must* have created him so; because, —

¹ Taylor, as quoted by Emmons, Vol. IV. p. 448.

² Works, Vol. IV. p. 448.

³ *Ib.* Vol. II. p. 24.

"To suppose that God implanted in his mind the principles of moral agency, without making him a moral agent, is extremely absurd. For, if God gave him the powers of perception, reason, and conscience, he must have been immediately under moral obligation, which he must have immediately either fulfilled or violated, and so have immediately become either holy or sinful."¹

From the account which Moses gives of the creation of Adam, and from the history of him who was created in the image of God, up to the time of his eating the forbidden fruit, it was perfectly clear to our author that God made man upright in the sense of holy.²

Of the original nobility and happiness of man, Dr. Emmons had the most exalted conceptions. His chastened imagination endowed our first parent with all those qualities that can beautify the body, adorn the mind, and exalt the heart. Lord of the whole creation, the fit representative to higher orders of a new race of intelligent beings, he was of noble mein and majestic bearing, with countenance radiating

"Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure."

When discoursing on the original purity and bliss of our common progenitor, Dr. Emmons appears to forget the lapse of ages and the ruins of the fall. Unmindful of centuries and distance, he enters the garden of the Lord and gazes with rapt vision on one of the most beautiful of God's creations. The spirit of the scene transfused through his own spirit, he thus embodies his conceptions:

"He was a noble and excellent Creature, as he came from the forming hand of his Maker. — His affections towards his Creator, and every inferior object, were perfectly right. He possessed more holiness than any of his descendants ever possessed in this imperfect state. Yes, he was in this respect but a little lower than the angels of light. — No man since the fall has ever displayed so much greatness of mind and goodness of heart as Adam displayed, while he resided in Paradise, and enjoyed the favor of his Maker.

How happy was Adam in his original state of moral rectitude and perfect innocence! His body was full of vigor and free from pain. His mind was full of light, and free from error. His heart was full of holiness, and free from moral impurity. His eyes and ears were feasted with a vast profusion of new, beautiful, grand, and delightful objects. His inheritance was rich and large, comprehending the world and the fulness thereof. He sensibly enjoyed the love and approbation of his Creator. He was permitted a free and unrestrained access to the fountain of holiness and happiness. Heaven and earth appeared unitedly engaged to raise him as high in knowledge, holiness and felicity, as his nature would permit him to rise."³

¹ Works, Vol. IV. p. 451.

² *Ib.* pp. 448—454.

³ *Ib.* p. 455.

The fall of man. Adam, endowed with reason and conscience, capable of loving God supremely and thereby securing forever that favor divine which is life, was put upon probation. A free, moral and accountable agent, God treated him as such by placing him under law. The law was that which the Creator had a perfect right to ordain, and which the creature had power to obey. It was a law in distinction from a covenant or constitution. Its words addressed to Adam personally; containing a precise prohibition, sanctioned by a precise penalty; Adam the very person prohibited; the thing prohibited his eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and the penalty annexed death;¹—it had all the characteristics of a proper law. Strange that it should ever have been mistaken for a covenant.² It differs from other divine laws in but a single particular. That is, in duration. It was intended for the time being to answer a specific purpose. That purpose answered, the law was no longer in force.³ In its nature, its extent—applicable to those and those only who are specified in it, and its power to condemn—exercised only against those who disobey, its resemblance to all other divine laws is perfect.⁴ The penalty by which this law was sanctioned is eternal death. Temporal death is no fit penalty for sin against a holy God. Spiritual death is neither more nor less than sin itself; and to suppose that sin itself was threatened as a punishment for sin, is absurd. It robs the threatening of all significance.⁵

This law Adam broke. Of the forbidden fruit the woman gave to him, and he did eat. Eve, previously beguiled by Satan, had already partaken of the interdicted tree. In the most favorable circumstances possible for persevering obedience, with unimpaired natural ability to maintain his integrity, with the express prohibition of God sanctioned by the threat of death, directly before him, he yet put forth his rash hand and ate of the forbidden fruit. The deed was done, the penalty incurred, and he died to holiness and peace apparently forever. The frown of God was upon him, and he already began to have an earnest of eternal death.

This sin of Adam was *original sin*.⁶ No one else can be guilty of it. It is named thus, not because it was the first transgression in the world, for Eve was before Adam in sin; nor simply because it was the first offence of the first man; but because, by a divine constitution, this was the particular sin which should so remarkably affect the moral condition of all mankind. In the divine purpose it was so arranged, that all the subsequent sinfulness of the first parents and their

¹ Works, Vol. IV. p. 464.² Ib. p. 465.³ Ib. p. 468.⁴ Ib. pp. 466, 467.⁵ Ib. p. 470.⁶ Ib. p. 493.

whole posterity should be seen to have been *occasioned* by this one sin.¹ 'By one man's disobedience many were made sinners.' So intimately connected was Adam with his children, that his lapse had a most disastrous influence upon their state and prospects. Not that his posterity committed his first sin; not that he transferred to them the guilt of that offence; not that he conveyed to them a morally corrupt nature; but that God appointed Adam to be the public head of his race, and determined to treat them according to his conduct.'²

The great reason why God devised and adopted this mode of treatment, was his regard for his own glory. Some particular reasons may also be assigned. There was fitness in placing human nature, uncorrupted and unimpaired, on trial. This trial, in the circumstances, was equivalent to a trial of each individual of the race.³ Its repetition in every other case, then, would have been neither wise nor benevolent. Resulting as it did, this trial prepared the way for the promise of a Saviour. If Adam, surrounded with such safeguards and appliances that his fall has been a marvel to the universe, nevertheless fell before the tempter and was in perishing need of one mighty to save, it was quite certain that every man would have the same need.⁴ Be it remembered, however, that the fall of Adam placed his posterity under no absolute necessity of sinning. A certainty that we shall, is not a necessity that we must sin. Sin, in its own nature, is voluntary, not necessitated. Adam 'must answer for his own sins, and we must answer for ours.'⁵ God has done no injustice, therefore, to the race in making 'Adam the public head of his posterity. No one has the least right to complain of this arrangement, because there is no imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants, nor transfer of his guilt to them, nor punishment inflicted on them for his sake.⁶ In the exercise of his sovereignty, God had a perfect right to bring man into being, and appoint the bounds of his habitation, or place him under any constitution which infinite wisdom saw to be best.

"If he had a right to bring us into existence, he had an equal right to determine how he would bring us into existence, whether as single detached individuals, like the angels, or as naturally and constitutionally connected with our first and great progenitor."⁷

Man's present condition. Though fallen he has still all the powers of a moral and responsible agent. His mind is immaterial and indivisible, yet it has many faculties and susceptibilities. In perceiving,

¹ Works, Vol. IV. p. 493. ² Ib. pp. 487—491. ³ Ib. p. 492. ⁴ Ib. p. 493.

⁵ Ib. p. 497.

⁶ Ib. p. 496.

⁷ Ib.

remembering, reasoning, judging, and willing, it is the same man, working all in all. The power to perform these operations constitutes him a moral agent. This is his natural ability to do whatsoever God requires of him.¹ That which specially distinguishes man from the lower orders of creation is conscience. He has indeed far higher capacity for progress in knowledge and happiness than they²; but his peculiar characteristic is the faculty of moral discernment.³ With this power, he sees the essential difference between virtue and vice; is conscious of moral obligation; is self-approved when he does right, and self-condemned when he does wrong; and feels that he deserves reward or punishment according to his works.⁴ Such are his powers now, although he has lost that moral image of God in which he was created. He can make indefinite advancement in knowledge and holiness, and is under the most imperative obligation to love God with all his heart and soul.

What he might and ought to do, however, he utterly fails to do. From the commencement of his moral agency, he begins to sin. Making self his god, he withholds his supreme affections from the true God. Observation and experience render it probable, and the Scriptures make it quite certain, that, as soon as a human being has the powers of a moral agent, he exercises unholy affections. In other words he sins as soon as he becomes capable of sinning.⁵ How early this is, may not perhaps be known with absolute certainty, but probably it is sooner than he can utter his thoughts;⁶ nay, it is very natural to conclude that infants are *moral agents* as soon as they are *agents*.⁷ All by nature, are 'dead in trespasses and in sins.' The race is sinful. 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.' Why is this? Not because they have not power to exercise holy affections, as well as sinful ones. They have this power. Not because a sinful nature was transmitted to them from the first sinner, by which all their sinful exercises are caused. 'For it is impossible to conceive of a corrupt and sinful nature prior to, and distinct from corrupt and sinful exercises.'⁸ Nor is it through the force of a self-determining, self-sufficient, independent power,⁹ by which they set themselves in opposition to God. But the ultimate reason is to be found in the eternal purpose of God that, if the first man, tried in circumstances the most auspicious should disobey and fall, his de-

¹ Works, IV. p. 503. ² Vol. II. pp. 26, 28.

³ Vol. IV. p. 162.

⁴ Ib. pp. 158, 159.

⁵ Ib. p. 505.

⁶ Ib. p. 504.

⁷ Vol. II. p. 163.

⁸ Vol. IV. p. 508. Dr. Emmons did not, as some have imagined he did, believe in the annihilation of infants. See Note, Vol. IV. p. 510.

⁹ Ib.

scendants, should begin their responsible agency as sinners.¹ This purpose, however, contemplated and made certain the entire moral freedom of each individual sinner. His native depravity furnishes no excuse for past transgression, and is no insurmountable obstacle to repentance and a holy life.²

Dr. Emmons believed that entire depravity both of heart and act, may be predicated of sinners.³ This depravity consists entirely in moral exercises, and as the moral exercises of a sinner are all wrong, he is entirely depraved. But it is the moral feeling which gives character to the outward act; and if sinners always act from the heart, and if the heart from which they act be totally depraved, then total depravity must be affirmed of all their actions.⁴ Not that there is nothing in them which may be called good. They may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, relieve the oppressed, cherish kindly affections, and perform many deeds of apparent benevolence.⁵ But, as they do all these things under the influence of a selfish spirit, God who weighs the motives of all, must condemn them. Even when they engage in religious services, their hearts are not right with God, and therefore their apparent 'sacrifice is an abomination in his sight.' God, 'viewing the best actions of sinners as flowing from a totally corrupt heart, abhors and condemns them as altogether criminal.'⁶ It is perfectly easy to account for all the kind offices and amiable natural affections of sinners, without supposing that God, 'who looketh upon the heart,' sees in them the least particle of moral goodness.⁷

The essence of all moral evil, is selfishness. In this consists the depravity of every sinner. Not in some deranged or vitiated state of the natural powers or the constitutional susceptibilities: not in some evil taste, whether inherited or implanted by the Creator; but in the constant and supreme preference of self to God. It would be proper for sinners to love themselves as a part of God's intelligent creation, or according to their real worth as designed to glorify the Creator;⁸ but they love themselves selfishly, or because they are themselves. This makes them supremely selfish; and in this selfishness is the essence of all their depravity. This is the carnal mind — enmity against God.

"It seeks a personal interest, which is diametrically opposite to the glory of God, and the general interest of his kingdom. It tends to spread misery and destruction through the universe. Can there be any thing virtuous, or amiable, or praiseworthy in such a totally selfish love,

¹ Works Vol. IV. p. 508.

² *Ib.* p. 513.

³ *Ib.* p. 517.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 523.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 527.

⁶ *Ib.* p. 526.

⁷ *Ib.* p. 547.

⁸ *Ib.* p. 543.

which is disconformity to God, disobedience to his law, and in its nature and tendency destructive of all the good of his holy kingdom ? ”¹

Man's need of a Saviour. Having broken the law of God, man is exposed to suffer its penalty. He cannot save himself from everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. He must forever perish unless something can be done to honor the law which he has violated, vindicate the justice and veracity of God, and as fully secure the great interests of the universe as would the direct execution of the penalty against him. It would have been just for God to let the law take its course on every transgressor. But it was his purpose from eternity to save multitudes of the human family. That he might do this consistently with the integrity of his own character, he gave his only begotten Son to die for the sins of men. ‘That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, God hath set forth his Son to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins.’ ‘The atonement was necessary entirely on God’s account.’² Not on account of sinners ; for he might have destroyed them all, or he might, in the exercise of his mere sovereignty have saved them all, without doing injustice to them, or any of his creatures. But he could not have been true to his word, nor just to his law, and yet save sinners without an atonement. The great problem to be solved in the government of God was, How can God be just, and yet merciful towards offenders? This question no finite intelligence could answer. Infinite Wisdom devised and infinite Benevolence adopted a plan which met all the exigencies of the case. The death of Christ on the cross was adapted to show God’s hatred of sin, his regard for his law, and to answer most gloriously all those purposes which the execution of the penalty would have done. ‘Knowing that he could effect these ends by the vicarious sufferings of a proper substitute, God accepted the offer of his own Son — the only substitute in the universe, who was competent to the great work of making a complete atonement for sin.’ The importance of the subject, then, acquires a definite statement of our author’s views respecting the

§ 10. *Person and Atonement of Christ.*

Foretold by prophets, typified by various rites and trusted in by thousands before he made his appearance in the world ; taking upon him our nature, embodying the God in the man, living to be a pattern

¹ Works, Vol. IV. p. 547.

² Ib. Vol. V. p. 18.

to his disciples to the end of the world, and dying that man might live for ever; rising from the dead by his own power, ascending to the throne of his Father, there to reign until he shall have subjected all things to his own dominion; he is the most wonderful being in the universe. First of all, he is truly and properly a man.¹ He has a human body and a human soul. Born of woman, increasing in favor with God and with men, placed under law, his condition on earth comprising the essential elements of a state of probation, no stronger proof could be given, than is found in these facts, of his true and proper humanity.² Then, he was really, and in the highest sense, divine. This is perfectly obvious from his testimony concerning himself. Being a man, he made himself God. Calling himself the 'Son of God,' declaring again and again his oneness with the Father, as it would be blasphemous for a mere man to do, appropriating the attributes, performing the works and receiving the homage of God, the evidence would seem to be complete, that he is really a divine being.³ Thirdly, the true divinity and proper humanity are united in the one person Christ Jesus. We may not suppose that his human nature was made divine, or that his divine nature was made human. It is impossible to conceive how this could be done; and if we were to suppose it accomplished, then Christ would be an essentially different being from what he is represented to be in the Scriptures. The union of the human with the divine is such that Jesus could with propriety affirm, 'I am man, I am God, and I am both God and man.' One and the self-same person suffered as man and acted as God.⁴ Should any allege that such a statement involves mystery; it is granted. But here, as elsewhere, a distinction must be taken between mystery and absurdity. To understand everything about Christ, were not possible for finite minds; but the point now under consideration is a fact plainly revealed. As such, it may be understood and believed; while the mystery attending it, incomprehensible by us, may be left with those 'secret things which belong to God.' To admit our own insufficiency and ignorance may be humiliating, yet it is not unbecoming; but to deny the great doctrine of the divine and human united in the person of Christ, is to exalt human reason at the expense of revelation.⁵ You could not have met the views of Dr. Emmons on this subject with the full admission of the divinity, unless you also acknowledged the proper humanity of the Lord Jesus. Again, if you had recognized the man Christ Jesus in your discourse, he would

¹ Works, Vol. IV, p. 584.² *Ib.* pp. 596—600.³ *Ib.* pp. 585—588.⁴ *Ib.* p. 591.⁵ *Ib.* p. 592.

have anticipated the complement of his unique and glorious character, by hearing you ascribe to him the works and award to him the worship of the true God. His conceptions of the person, offices and works of the Saviour were so exalted and peculiar, that no system could realize, no representation embody them, which did not invest him with all the milder attributes of man and make him the centre of all divine perfections. Results of the highest moment are connected with the admission that he is a man; an essential part of his great work becomes an utter failure, unless he be seen as the true God and eternal life; then only is his whole nature shadowed forth and his sublime work complete, when the divine and human meet in one person Christ Jesus. With a single extract to show how important Dr. Emmons regarded a belief in Christ's divinity, we pass on to the atonement. Having affirmed that a denial of this truth is a virtual impeachment of the Saviour's veracity, while it at the same time sets reason in conflict with revelation,¹ he remarks

“That the establishment of Christ's divinity establishes the beauty and consistency of his whole character and conduct. It is this which demonstrates the rectitude of his moral character; and so renders him worthy of respect and imitation of the Socinians themselves. It is this which gives value to his death, and so renders him a complete and all-sufficient Saviour. It is this which reconciles all the great things ascribed to him by the prophets and the apostles. It is this which renders him worthy of the humble homage and praises of all the hosts of heaven. It is this which establishes the truth and importance of the Gospel. It is this which ratifies the truth of those great and precious promises that remain to be fulfilled, and assures us that religion shall have a long and universal reign. It is this which affords permanent light and consolation to all good men, while passing through the dark and dreary journey of life. In a word, it is the Divinity of Christ which spreads a lustre over the face of the world, and calls upon Zion to rejoice that her God reigneth.”²

The *Atonement*, necessary to illustrate the veracity and vindicate the justice of God,³ was made by the sufferings, and not by the obedience of Christ.⁴ His perfect obedience qualified him to perform his great work; but, strictly speaking, was no part of the work itself. The lamb must be ‘without blemish,’ indeed; but it was the *death* of the immaculate lamb which constituted the real efficacy, the life of the sacrifice. Something was to be done to display the unimpaired integrity of God's character, while he should proclaim pardon to the offender. This, mere obedience, how perfect soever, could not do. It was need-

¹ Vol. IV. p. 592, 593.

² *Ib.* p. 594.

³ Vol. V. pp. 18—22.

⁴ *Ib.* pp. 27, 33

ful, as a qualification for him who was to make the sacrifice; but the sufferings were indispensable that the great Lawgiver and Sovereign might vindicate his righteousness and yet forgive the sinner. True, he was 'obedient unto death;' but the death was what the exigencies of the case demanded, and herein is to be sought the whole virtue of his atonement.

The death of Christ is not to be understood as a price paid for the redemption of a sinner. He paid neither 'our debt of punishment, nor our debt of obedience.' He neither sinned, nor was punished. It would be absurd to suppose, therefore, that he literally paid our debt of punishment. Equally unreasonable would it be to imagine that his obedience answered all the requisitions which God's law makes upon us. His obedience was on his own account, and not ours. It cannot literally be transferred to us. It merits nothing for us.¹ What, then, is meant by sinners 'being redeemed with the precious blood of Christ,' and the church's being 'purchased with his own blood?' Simply this: 'Christ has made, by his sufferings and death, an adequate atonement for sin, on account of which God can consistently offer salvation to all, and actually bestow it on every penitent, believing sinner.' The 'blood of Christ cannot literally pay a debt of guilt, but it can and did *atone* for that guilt, and procure the offer of pardon from a merciful God.'² In the resemblance of this forgiveness of sin to a discharge from a pecuniary obligation, lies the force of the representation that we are 'purchased by the blood of Christ.'

Such being the nature of the atonement and its efficacy in procuring the pardon of sin under a perfect moral government, it becomes a question of intense interest, How shall the sinner avail himself of this provision of mercy? Are all who have sinned forgiven of course, now that an atonement has been made; or are there certain conditions to be complied with, before a single offender can be absolved from his terrible liability? We are thus brought to the doctrine of

§ 11. *Justification by Faith.*

To be justified, according to Dr. Emmons, is to be pardoned, to be forgiven, or to have the punishment due to sin remitted.³ The term justification, though borrowed from the practice of civil courts, has this peculiarity of meaning: that they whom God justifies for Christ's sake, while treated as just, so far as the *suffering* of punishment is concerned, are not regarded as just in respect of the *desert* of punishment. The

¹ Works, Vol. V. pp. 32, 33.

² *Ib.* p. 35.

Ib. p. 44.

Sovereign views them actually guilty of transgression and deserving to suffer that penalty by which his law is sanctioned; still, on account of the blood shed by their Substitute, he glorifies his own mercy in delivering them from condemnation. This is justification — complete forgiveness, nothing more, nothing less.¹ This is granted to sinners solely for Christ's sake, on account of the atonement which he has made; and it is the great thing of which every sinner stands in perishing need. Without it, not a ray of hope can reach him from heaven or earth. With it, he is prepared to be rewarded for all good deeds, as though he had never sinned, and will at last be glorified in heaven. This is *all* that God bestows upon the offender on account of the atonement.² Whatever else he gives, is given on other grounds, for other reasons. Dr. Emmons did not deny that other blessings may be vouchsafed to us indirectly through Christ. He freely admitted this.³ But he saw no discrepancy between this and the position which he defined so clearly, and so earnestly defended, that 'forgiveness of sin is the only thing which comes to us directly on account of his death.' This especially and only, was what rendered that death necessary.

The condition on which any are justified for Christ's sake, is *faith*. 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' It is only to them that believe, that the promise of pardon is ever verified. This faith is speculative, historical, and practical. It involves correct apprehensions of Christ, a belief that he is the divinely-appointed Saviour, affectionate reliance upon him, and supreme devotion to his service. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' 'The very essence of that faith which secures salvation, is love to Christ.'⁴ Correct theory respecting his offices and work, is not enough. An historical belief that he entered our world at the time, and lived and died in the manner which the Scriptures declare he did, is not enough. The clear perception that his death was necessary, that he fully met all the exigencies of the case, and that if the sinner does not believe in him he must perish, is not the essential element of true faith. There must be the utter renunciation of self-righteousness, and the hearty reception of Jesus Christ as a personal and all-sufficient Saviour.⁵

This faith in Christ presupposes love to God and repentance for sin. 'That holy, disinterested love which fulfils the law, is the first fruit of the Spirit.'⁶ In the order of Christian graces, this takes precedence; and it is also an important element in each of the excellences that adorn the child of God. It is impossible that a sinner should mourn over his sins in a godly manner, until he truly loves the God whose law he has

¹ Works, Vol. V. p. 63.² Ib. pp. 55—68.³ Ib. pp. 60, 61 et 71.⁴ Ib. Vol. I. p. 140.⁵ Ib. Vol. V. p. 44.⁶ Ib. p. 159.

broken.¹ 'This love, in its very nature, is virtual hatred and practical abandonment of sin. Enthroning God on his affections, the offender abhors himself, and repents as in dust and ashes.' His heart fixed on God in supreme love and turned towards sin with mingled sorrow and hatred, he is prepared to welcome Christ in his character of Saviour. Seeing the glory of the divine perfections and the holiness of God's law and condemning himself on account of his transgressions, he looks for help and cries out for mercy. The 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' is presented to his despairing heart, and he is assured that God can through him be just and yet forgive the offender. He looks, believes, and is saved. Thus faith in Christ presupposes, in the order of nature, repentance for sin; and repentance presupposes love to God. From the necessities of the case, this order cannot be reversed.² We are thus led to inquire as to our author's opinions of

§ 12. *Regeneration.*

Dissatisfied with much that had been taught on this subject, he investigated it for himself, and endeavored to give it that character and place in his theological system, which the Scriptures and a reasonable faith alike approve. The results of his investigation may be briefly stated. Regeneration in a human soul is the commencement of supreme love to God. It is the beginning of a new moral life. Mere awakening, or alarm on account of danger, or conviction of sin, though antecedent to, is no essential part of the new birth. Nor is it the mere reformation of external deportment, though this usually follows it. It is not the production of any new natural powers, or the implantation of a new taste or dormant principle, lying back of the will and, not by action but simply by being there, giving character to its acts.³ Such a principle is a figment of fancy; and, even if you admit its existence, it can serve no valuable purpose. You cannot predicate of it either volition, or reason, or activity. Its supposititious existence is as needless as it is unphilosophical. Sinners already have the powers, and the whole powers of a free moral agent. What others do they require? The creation of new faculties is not what they need, but a disposition to use aright the faculties they have. The word of truth is not, 'Thy people shall be *able*,' but 'Thy people shall be *willing* in the day of thy power.' 'To make a new heart and a new spirit,' is to turn from the supreme love of self to the supreme love of God. As soon as a sinner yields the homage of his heart to his Maker, he is 'born of God,' 'created anew,' or regenerated. 'The special work of the Spirit in

¹ Works, Vol. V. p. 159.

² *Ib.* p. 160.

³ *Ib.* p. 123.

regeneration is to change the hearts of sinners from sin to holiness, or from hatred to love.¹

This great change is imperatively *needed* by every sinner. The ground of this necessity is the fact, that each one is 'dead in trespasses and sins.' The carnal mind, 'not subject to the law of God,' has no fitness for a holy heaven² — *could* not be happy, provided it were to be admitted there. It *must* be renewed in its spirit, or it can never see the kingdom of God. That this necessity is absolute in the case of every one in his natural (unregenerate) condition, is perfectly obvious to all who believe the doctrine of human depravity. 'And every one may be convinced of total depravity, who will properly consult the Bible, or the exercises of his own heart.'³

Regeneration is an *instantaneous* change. Denied by many, it is nevertheless agreeable to the reason of the thing, and made certain by fact. The preliminary steps that usually lead to it may be gradual; but the actual beginning of the new life cannot be. It is a new creation, and all God's creative acts are instantaneous.' 'God always acts instantaneously in taking away the old, and in giving a new heart.'⁴

In this spiritual renovation, man is not *passive* but *active*. He turns from self to God. He is as really active in regeneration, as in conversion, or sanctification.⁵ Under the impulse of a divine agency, he freely renounces sin and chooses holiness. Universally admitted that men are active in exercising love to God and their fellow-men, how can it be contended that they are passive in regeneration, when this is neither more nor less than the very beginning of love to God? Dr. Emmons here brought his 'Exercise Scheme' into full play, and so applied it as to concentrate the strongest pressure of moral obligation upon the conscience of the unrenewed man. He regarded the doctrine of passivity in this transformation of the inner man, as fraught with exceeding danger. 'It is in conflict with every command in the Bible.'⁶

Regeneration is *not supernatural*. It suspends no law of nature, and involves no exertion of miraculous power. It is indeed a *special* work of the Holy Spirit, 'because he renews some and not others, and because in regeneration and sanctification he produces those gracious affections which are not common to mankind.' It is not therefore supernatural. It is in perfect agreement with the laws of his action on human minds, and with the unimpaired freedom and unabbreviated responsibility of each subject of the change. To represent it otherwise, is to invite the dangerous inference, that sinners are literally unable to love God, and repent of sin, or obey any of the divine commands. It is im-

¹ Works, Vol. V. pp. 113, 115.

² Ib. p. 144.

³ Ib. p. 155.

⁴ Ib. Vol. VI. p. 429.

⁵ Ib. Vol. V. p. 117.

⁶ Ib. p. 119.

possible to preach a supernatural regeneration without ministering a fatal opiate to the conscience of the sinner, or at least furnishing him with an excuse for his impenitence which he will be likely to use so as to facilitate his destruction.'¹

That holy love which is the beginning of this new life, continued and exhibited in its appropriate forms, becomes *sanctification*. Lying at the foundation, it is also essential to the whole superstructure of Christian character. The pure spring, it imparts its qualities to all the streams that issue from it. 'Everything which the law requires and which enters into the idea of perfect obedience, is the product of benevolent love.'² 'Joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,' are to love, as the branches to the trunk. There can be no such thing as sanctification where love does not fill the heart and prompt the actions of the life.

This great work once begun in the heart, will be 'carried on unto perfection in the day of Christ.' 'The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus will make the renewed spirit free from the law of sin and death,' and render it 'meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This is made certain, not by any strength of holy purpose on the part of the Christian, but by the promise of God in Christ. 'None shall pluck them out of my hand.' The doctrine of the *final perseverance of the saints*, is indeed encouraging and radiant of spiritual beauty to the imperfect Christian; but it holds out no license to sin. The two things have nothing in common. They look altogether in different directions; and are not to be named at the same time, except to repudiate all supposititious connection between them. The very idea of final perseverance involves the denial of sin and a life of godliness. It demands sleepless vigilance, abounding prayer, and earnest endeavor to 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The promise of eternal life on condition of saving faith, by no means renders unnecessary the exhortation to strive so as 'to make one's calling and election sure.' 'The first exercise of faith renders the salvation of the believer sure, in a certain way; that is, the way of perseverance in holiness.'³

The *means* of that great change in the sinner which, continued, becomes sanctification and perseverance to eternal life, is divine truth. To have grace, one must have some knowledge of God; to grow in grace, he must grow in knowledge. Sinners may know the truth and hate it; but they cannot love it without knowing it. The basis of all true love to God, is correct knowledge of God;⁴ and the more a Christian knows of the doctrines of Christianity, the more is his heart enlarged and his character exalted.⁵ 'Beholding, as in a glass, the glory

¹ Works, Vol. V. pp. 120, 121.

² Ib. p. 114.

³ Ib. pp. 349—351.

⁴ Ib. Vol. VI. pp. 52, 53.

⁵ Ib. Vol. V. pp. 373—375.

of God as it shines in the face of Christ, he is transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

We cannot complete the view of regeneration, without turning our attention to its *efficient cause*. Man is its subject, sin its necessity, love its nature, and truth its means. An inquiry as to its author, conducts us to the belief of Dr. Emmons respecting the

§ 13. *Holy Spirit.*

He thought that there is no satisfactory reason for the hypothesis 'of the eternal generation of the Son, and of the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost.'¹ The foundation of the Trinity is in the divine nature, not in the divine will. This utterly forbids the idea that 'the Son, with respect to his Deity, was begotten of the Father, and that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the concurrence of the Father and the Son.' The eternal generation of the Son, and the eternal procession of the Holy Ghost, are 'such mysteries as it is difficult to separate from absurdities,' and such doctrines as cannot be made to harmonize with the true idea of three equally divine persons in one God.' The Holy Spirit is the third person in the Trinity, inferior in office to the Father and the Son, but equal in every divine perfection. As the 'Father is by nature God, and by office, Creator, Lawgiver, and Governor; and as 'the Son is by nature God, and by office, Redeemer, Mediator or Saviour; so 'the Holy Ghost is by nature God, and by office, Sanctifier and Comforter of the heirs of salvation.' Officially, his work is subordinate to that of the Son as well as that of the Father. The atonement which Christ made, the Spirit applies to those who were ordained to eternal life. It is his prerogative to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come. It is under his mighty agency, that the sinner makes him a new heart and a new spirit. God's people become willing in the day of his power, because 'born of the Spirit.' By the 'washing of regeneration,' even 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost,' do they become sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. And not only does the Spirit begin this work in the heart of the Christian, but he perpetuates it. 'He carries on that work of grace within him,'² until he qualifies him to engage in the employments and share the bliss of heaven. Means and second causes are utterly powerless to effect that change which introduces the sinner into the kingdom of holiness, or to continue that process by which the soul is purified from the dross of sin and fitted to dwell with God and the Lamb. 'Sanctification is the *work* of God's Spirit; it is also

¹ Works, Vol. IV. p. 114.

² *Ib.* p. 134.

the act of the believer. It is no part of our philosophy or our theology, to deny that God begins the work of grace in the heart; and we have the same evidence that he carries it on, as that he begins it. In regeneration God produces the first active principles of grace in the soul; in sanctification he continues and sustains them.¹ The Holy Spirit, possessed of the attributes and performing the works of God, should receive divine worship. We 'should pray to him for his sanctifying, guiding and comforting influences.' His nature and office are such as to justify and encourage immediate and distinct supplications to him.² The peculiar work of the Spirit is of transcendent importance, because it is essential to the salvation of every sinner who reaches heaven. Without it, notwithstanding the amazing love of God in giving his Son to die, and the unequalled sacrifice which Christ has made, not a rebel would be reclaimed to his allegiance to God — not a transgressor forgiven and saved.³ The unrenewed heart deliberately rejects the Saviour — will not have him to reign over its affections and purposes, till, under the mighty agency of the Spirit, it is created anew in Christ Jesus.

In connection with what Dr. Emmons inculcated respecting the Holy Spirit, we may collate his teachings concerning the doctrine of

§ 14. *Perfection.*

By some it has been contended, that the premises which he claimed to have established in this division of his theological system, necessarily involve the conclusions of 'Modern Perfectionism.' But he is known to have had as little sympathy with this theory, as any man who has palpably exposed its unsoundness. By direct assertion and various incidental allusion, he taught the imperfection of believers — of all believers in this state of probation. That all Christians *should* be holy, constantly, perfectly, in thought, word and deed, he believed and preached. Not that they can cherish affections 'as vigorous, strong and fervent as those of Christ, or the angels of light, or the spirits of just men made perfect;' but they can and ought to be habitually and constantly devoted to the service of God. In the constancy of their holy exercises, must consist their perfection of holiness.⁴ Should they but uniformly cherish the love of God in their hearts, and never indulge a selfish affection, they would be perfectly holy. Their moral exercises are not partly holy and partly sinful, but either

¹ Theol. Review, Vol. I. pp. 112, 113.

² *Ib.* p. 123.

³ Works, Vol. IV. p. 138.

⁴ *Ib.* Vol. V. p. 360.

sinful or holy without intermixture.¹ They are under the strongest possible obligations to be uninterruptedly in the fear and love of God. This is within the compass of their ability. God's law unequivocally demands it. This law is unabated in its strictness under the Gospel. The new Dispensation offers no palliation, contains no justifying plea for moral imperfection. True, it provides for the pardon of transgressors; but it imperatively demands the perfecting of holiness in the fear of God.² Obligation is commensurate with natural ability; and though the influence of past evil habit and vicious example is hostile to their growth in grace and in knowledge, yet Christians have power to be holy as God demands.

This, however, does not prove that they are, in fact perfectly holy. It is the plain teaching of Scripture, confirmed by experience and observation, that believers in this world are exceedingly imperfect.³ Their life is a constant struggle against sin, in which they are not always victorious. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and they often break their best resolutions by not 'doing the things they would.' Not that the holiness they do have is not holy; not that their right exercises are weaker than those of glorified spirits; not that in the same affections there is a mixture of holiness and sin; but they cherish far too many affections that have nothing morally good in them.⁴ Believers every where are conscious of having such exercises; and in these consists this imperfection.

This idea of entire holiness or sin being predicated of every feeling of the heart, has been animadverted upon by some with no little severity. Others have pronounced the reasoning of our author on this point as logically sound, but experimentally fallacious. They cannot invalidate his arguments, because his premises commend themselves to right reason and his conclusions are legitimately drawn; but they feel that he must be wrong, and claim that their spontaneous intuitions are more reliable than his logical sequences. Aware that his teachings on this subject were somewhat peculiar, our author anticipated many of the objections which would be urged against him, and so disposed of them as to convince many a mind that his premises are strong, if not impregnable, and his conclusions logical, if not irresistible. Straited for space, we must forbear to make quotations, and content ourselves with indicating to the reader the pages which he will be richly rewarded for studying.⁵

The next topic which claims our attention is what Dr. Emmons taught respecting

¹ Works, Vol. V. p. 201.

² *Ib.* pp. 361—364.

³ *Ib.* p. 198.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 202.

⁵ *Ib.* pp. 205—208.

§ 15. *Unconditional Submission.*

Various changes have been rung upon the phrase, 'willing to be damned.' As though our author insisted upon such willingness as essential to any well founded hope of salvation, it has been antithetically replied by others, 'all God requires is that men should be willing to be saved.' To this he would cordially have assented, with the simple qualification, that they must be willing to be saved on the terms of the Gospel. He neither believed nor assented, that any must be unconditionally willing to be lost. Submission to the will of God without stipulation or reserve, is by no means synonymous with an unconditional willingness to be banished forever from the presence of God. Nor does the former imply the latter. 'Father, thy will be done,' is the natural and comprehensive form in which genuine submission ever utters itself. 'A willingness to suffer any evil which the divine benevolence inflicts, and that not from love of the evil, but from love to God whose benevolence is thus expressed,' is both rational and scriptural. The will bowed in perfect submission to the great Sovereign, receives the severest chastisement as uncomplainingly as the slightest, because, in the one case and in the other, that sovereign is infinitely wise and superlatively amiable.¹ He that cannot say from the heart, 'Not my will, but thine, O God, be done,' lacks the essential element of submission, and can have no satisfactory evidence that he is a Christian. 'No truth is of greater practical importance than this, that every person, in order to be saved, must be conditionally willing that God should dispose of him, for time and eternity, as shall contribute in the highest degree to his glory and the good of the universe.'² 'The sovereignty of God, resulting from his absolute supremacy, admits of no limitations.'³ In dispensing evil, as in dispensing good, he is guided by his own wisdom and prompted by his own justice and goodness. To his will therefore, the submission of intelligent creatures must be without reserve. It must altogether approve of that sovereignty which is absolute and unlimited. The Judge of all the earth will do right and right only in all the diversities of his creative power, the allotments of his providence, and the discriminations of his grace. Therefore, every one should bow submissively before his throne, and cheerfully acquiesce in all the varieties of his agency. As God's sovereignty displays the concentrated glory of all his natural and moral perfections, it demands and should receive the cordial and unreserved submission of every being capable of knowing him.⁴

¹ Works, Vol. I. (Memoir) p. 83.² *Ib.* Vol. V. p. 288.³ *Ib.* Vol. III. p. 123.⁴ *Ib.* p. 120.

You may not be willing to accept all the statements which Dr. Emmons has made in some of his peculiar applications of this truth. You may affirm that he has in some instances gone to extremes, carrying the doctrine where it never was intended to be taken, and gathering around it a cluster of test questions which seem to intrude into the deep things of God and involve a willingness forever to suffer under the inflictions of his wrath. But who can deny his fundamental idea of submission, without involving himself in inextricable difficulties? The writer recollects often to have heard him say, 'If a man can sincerely adopt the prayer, *Thy will be done*, he exercises unconditional submission to the full extent I have taught it.'

We pass several points of interest, and come next to the constitutions, officers and ordinances of the

§ 16. Christian Church.

This is both visible and invisible; the former importing a society of visible saints, the latter comprehending all real saints. Visible saints are 'those who profess to be real saints, and such as Christian charity judges to be sincere and true.' That which constitutes a number of visible saints a proper church, is a *mutual covenant*.¹ Where there is not a voluntary and reciprocal engagement between Christians to walk together in the commandments and ordinances of the Gospel, there is no church. Other things may be desirable; this is essential. A body of believers thus bound together by covenant engagements, is recognized by Christ as a visible church and is empowered by him to do all that is necessary for the order, harmony and prosperity of the whole body. It does not derive authority or power from the church universal, or from other churches, or from the clergy; but directly from Christ himself.² From him it has the right of admission, watchfulness and reproof, and discipline both by admonition and excision.³ The right to choose and install its own officers, without dictation from either ministers or other churches, is clearly, its own. A church thus formed and organized is in a condition to exercise every act of ecclesiastical power, according to the directions which Christ has given.⁴ Other ecclesiastical bodies are of human device. They may, or may not be invited, at the option of the church, to give advice in any emergency,⁵ but 'their advice is only advisory,' having no binding author-

¹ Works' Vol. V. p. 445.

² Ib. p. 446.

³ Ib. pp. 447, 448.

⁴ Ib. p. 450.

⁵ Dr. Emmons was far from being opposed to Councils, whether for the ordination and dismission of ministers, or for giving advice in cases of difficulty. He only objected to their action being considered as authoritative.

ity. This is the scriptural platform of church discipline, and admirably fitted to answer the ends of its ordainment. It is directly opposed to the Papacy, Episcopacy, and also to Presbyterianism. It makes every church the equal sister of every other church, and guarantees to every individual member his freedom and his rights. It recognizes no tribunal higher than the judgment of the church, when that judgment has been once fairly and definitely pronounced. There is no appeal to Presbytery, or Synod, or General Assembly, or House of Bishops, or to his holiness the Pope.¹

The *Officers of the Church* are Ministers and Deacons. These are chosen by the brethren, and ordained according to their will. The authority that elects and installs, can also set aside.² The ministers of the churches may neither 'lord it over God's heritage,' nor claim official superiority over one another. They are brethren all one in Christ, and He their common head.

The *Ordinances of the Church*, are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism by affusion, or sprinkling is the only scriptural mode;³ believers and their households are the proper subjects.⁴ 'The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is a standing memorial of Christ's death.'⁵ As such it is to be observed to the end of the world, or until he comes the second time without sin unto salvation. There were important reasons why the *death* of Christ in particular should be thus commemorated. It was the most striking scene ever witnessed in the universe; it was the strongest expression ever given of God's love to a sinful world; this alone made that great atonement whereby God can be just and yet justify the believer.⁶ It should be observed by all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, with reverence, humility, and the spirit of entire consecration to him who gave himself a ransom for them. It demands the most grateful affections towards the Father and the Son, and the renewal of that pledge by which the soul was first freely dedicated to the divine service.⁷

§ 17. *Future Retribution.*

The characters of men are formed in this life; rewards and punishments are to be justly meted out in the future. 'The souls of the righteous survive their bodies, and go directly to heaven.'⁸ Those are in great error who believe that the soul sleeps in the intermediate

¹ Works, Vol V. p. 453. ² Ib. p. 450. ³ Ib. p. 482 ⁴ Ib. pp. 482—495.

⁵ Ib. p. 504 ⁶ Ib. pp. 504—507. ⁷ Ib. p. 508. ⁸ Ib. pp. 532—537.

state between the death and resurrection of the body.¹ It lives, thinks, feels, enjoys or suffers. Departed saints are happy, and departed sinners unhappy. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance in that he raised him from the dead. Previous to this there will be a literal and general resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.² All things are preparing for that great day as fast as possible.³ The transactions of that day will be of the most solemn character;⁴ its decisions will be definitive and universal.⁵ The punishment of the wicked will be eternal, as well as the happiness of the righteous.⁶ God will glorify himself in the final destruction of all his incorrigible enemies, and in the confirmed and ever increasing happiness of all who repent, and believe the Gospel of his Son.

The above is, at best, but a brief synopsis of Dr. Emmons's theological opinions. As far as it goes, however, it is believed to be impartial and correct. The more carefully it is examined, the more clearly will it be seen to correspond, in all its essential parts, with the grand system of revealed truth which has been taught in the evangelical churches by their ablest and most revered divines. The greatness of Dr. Emmons does not consist solely, or mainly, in his peculiarities. That he was an advocate for the utmost freedom and independence of thought; that he fearlessly followed his first principles to all their legitimate conclusions, no matter how bold or startling they were; in a word, that he had his mental idiosyncrasies, and stood before the world in the freedom and strength of his own individuality; there is no disposition, as there is no occasion to deny.

Some of his speculations indeed, have been considered as contradictory to sound philosophy and the spirit of revelation. But it has been found much easier to make an assertion to this effect, than to prove it. They who have studied him sufficiently to master the first principles of his reasoning, have been deeply interested to see these principles carried through all his discussions, and gratified to observe the symmetry and beauty they have imparted to his whole system of theology. He was accustomed to say to young clergymen, 'Be careful not to cross your own track. To avoid this, take first principles as guides.' He had this 'criterion of a consistent and consecutive reasoner, that the mutual harmony of his theories becomes the more apparent whenever we examine the processes by which he

¹ Works, Vol. V. p. 539.² Vol. IV, pp. 71, 280.³ *Ib.* p. 619.⁴ *Ib.* p. 623.⁵ *Ib.* p. 624.⁶ *Ib.* p. 559.

arrived at them, and the peculiar relations which subsisted between them in his own mind.¹

By some it has been questioned whether he made any discoveries of value in theological science, or has any just claim to originality. It would seem as though such questioners could not have made themselves acquainted with his works. A man may be original in two ways; first in the discovery of new truths, and secondly, in harmonizing old truths by presenting them in new relations. One of the most distinguished divines of our day has said, that 'it is glory enough for one man to have presented and applied the "Exercise scheme" as Dr. Emmons has done.' The Editor of his works truly remarks,

"By common consent, the 'Exercise Scheme' is his. He not only believed with others, that much of the sin and holiness of men consists in their voluntary affections, but that all of it does; and this principle he carried out in all its bearings upon the subject of human depravity, the connection of Adam with his posterity, the doctrine of regeneration, the free agency and accountability of man, and the government of God."²

It is not so much, however, in the discovery of new truths, that Dr. Emmons exhibits originality as in more clearly elucidating and more harmoniously arranging the old. From many an old process of reasoning he has eliminated the illogical and unsound, and given us a result at once clear and reliable. Points which were obscure before, he has made plain; and propositions which involved apparent contradiction, as previously stated and defended, have been freed by him from so heavy an incumbrance, and made to lie side by side in loving harmony.³ He always had an eye upon what he called the 'joints' of a discussion. 'From what does this come?' 'To what will this lead?' were questions which he asked and answered with great care, at every step of his progress in a train of reasoning. His estimate of a theologian was always graduated by the greater or less readiness and precision with which he could 'hit the joint' of a controversy.

This article may be unsatisfactory to some, because it does not give sufficient prominence to those points in which Dr. Emmons differed from others. They had formed the opinion that he was a sort of theological monster; that he made every thing of a few of the sterner doctrines of Christianity, and left those of a more practical bearing

¹ Works, Vol. I. p. 153. (Reflections of a visitor). ²Ib. p. 78. (Memoir.)

³Ib. p. 82.

almost entirely in the shade ; that he dwelt with avidity on the abstract and metaphysical, while he made few appeals to the conscience or the heart ; and that hence it was important, if he were presented at all, to hold him up in such a way that his teaching should have an aspect of repulsion rather than attraction. But it would be unpardonable injustice to the memory of the man, and a gross perversion of facts thus to represent one whose best affections clustered about the truth as it is in Jesus, and whose best energies were expended in elucidating that truth so that others might perceive its beautiful harmony, and enforcing it so that others, feeling its constraining and sanctifying power, might rejoice in its freedom and experience its salvation. The stranger who visited him while living, in 'order to see the bear,' found him a man of bright thoughts, genial sympathies, and remarkably fascinating and companionable. He left him with kind wishes and deep veneration, carrying with him remembrances which ever after made that visit an era in his life — a green and hallowed spot in his pilgrimage. So may he who commenced reading this article, expecting to see metaphysical speculations and theological abstractions projected in bold relief, and to behold their author as a rash, stern, one-sided, unpractical teacher, to be gazed at as a monster and then turned away from with fear and trembling, be as agreeably disappointed. May he see the consistency running through the whole of our author's system and giving character to it: and while seeing, may he rejoice in it, and be led to study all his works with profit and delight.

ARTICLE V.

LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THEODORE BEZA.¹

By E. D. C. Robbins, Professor of Languages in Middlebury College, Vt.

The Lineage and Childhood of Beza.

In a wild and mountainous part of Burgundy, a province in the eastern part of France, on the declivity of a mountain at the foot of which flows the river Eure, lies the small town of Vezelay. At a lit-

¹ This Article is founded mainly on a Work entitled: *Theodor Beza nach handschriftlichen Quellen dargestellt von Johann Wilhelm Baum. Erster Theil. Leipzig. 1843.*