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the letter *a* (*va, vat*) coalesces with the personal pronoun *im*, which is shortened from *am, vai* from *vaim*, first passed over into *ei*, and finally into a long *i* (Engl. *i* in *machine*), and the final *m* at first began to be sounded very weak, and at last was dropped altogether. Finally, this theory is proved by the formation of the Vedic aorists in *im*, which have not yet been reduplicated, as *badh-im, I killed, kramim, I mounted*, instead of the later *ab'adisham, akramisham*.

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#### ARTICLE IV.

#### JONATHAN EDWARDS, HIS CHARACTER, TEACHING, AND INFLUENCE.<sup>1</sup>

BY JOSEPH P. THOMPSON, D.D., NEW YORK.

WHEN Jonathan Edwards, at the age of fifty-four, was chosen to the Presidency of Nassau Hall, at Princeton, New Jersey, he alleged as difficulties in the way of accepting "that important and arduous office," — first, "his own defects, unfitting him for such an undertaking," and secondly, that "course of employ in his study, which had long engaged and swallowed up his mind, and been the chief entertain-

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an adverb formed by means of this very suffix, *statif* for *stative*. If we even grant an original *f* in the Oscan and Umbrian, yet we are not authorized thereby to transfer this at once to the Latin, since each of these idioms, in many respects, has taken its own course. We are much rather inclined to think that the forms *benarent, venurint, facurent, fecerint, procanarint, procinuerint*, present an abridged form of the suffixes *v* or *va, ve*; for if these forms are not for *benverent, veverint, facverint, procanverint* or *-ent*, there would not be a single trace of the perfect tense in these forms of the future perfect.

<sup>1</sup> The following article was originally prepared as one in a series of lectures before the Young Men's Christian Union, of Boston, upon "the influence of representative religious men on the moral and religious life of their own denominations and that of Christendom." It was subsequently delivered before the students of Andover and Yale Theological Seminaries. This statement will explain the rhetorical cast of the article, and the occasional use of the first person, which could not be avoided without changing its whole structure.

ment and delight of his life." Of defects he wrote: "I have a constitution in many respects peculiarly unhappy, attended with flaccid solids; vapid, sizzly, and scarce fluids, and a low tide of spirits; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and contemptibleness of speech, presence, and demeanor, with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college. . . . I am also deficient," he continues, "in some parts of learning, particularly in algebra and the higher parts of mathematics, and in the Greek classics; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the New Testament."<sup>1</sup> Such was the modest and evidently candid estimate which Edwards gave of his constitutional temperament and his acquirements in scholarship, as related to the Presidency of a college. What the detractors of Paul said of him at Corinth, Jonathan Edwards wrote of himself, — that "his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible." Yet the pen of Edwards, like the letters of Paul, was "weighty and powerful," and when he turned from his own defects, — "many of which," said he, "are generally known, besides others which my own heart is conscious of," — and enumerated to the Trustees the studies in which he found "the delight of his life," unfolding his method of study, and sketching the plans of his projected works, Edwards drew a psychological portrait of himself that looks upon us still with a calm and sacred majesty.

First, describing his habit of pursuing to the utmost anything "that seemed to promise light in any weighty point," and the materials of thought he had thus accumulated; next, expressing his earnest desire to write out "many things against most of the prevailing errors of the day;" he proceeds to sketch "a great work" which he "had long had on his mind and heart," "a History of the Work of Redemption," a body of divinity in the form of a history; "beginning," he says, "from eternity, and descending from

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards's Works, Vol. I. pp. 86, 87, First Worcester edition. This edition is referred to throughout, unless another is indicated.

thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have account of in history or prophecy, till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things; concluding my work with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity." Did even Milton rise to the height of so great an argument? Yet under infirmities of bodily temperament, and disabilities of literary position, Edwards could project this grand epic of the universe simply for his own profit and entertainment. With the same delight in study and in truth, he had "done much towards another great work, the *Harmony of the Old and New Testament*," in the course of which, he says: "there will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the Holy Scriptures," a work alone sufficient for the lifetime and the powers of any man. "Some of these things," he meekly adds, "if Divine Providence favor, I should be willing to attempt a publication of."<sup>1</sup>—Already he had published his "*Narrative of Surprising Conversions*," "*Thoughts on the Great Revival*," his searching analysis of the "*Religious Affections*," his touching "*Memoir of David Brainerd*," his essay on "*Qualifications for Communion*," and his "*Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*;" this profoundest contribution of New England to metaphysical theology having been written while its author was conscientiously and laboriously teaching the Stockbridge Indians the English alphabet and the simplest truths of the gospel. "So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have for benefiting my fellow creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak;" and so, because of his defects and his studies,—because he is of flaccid muscle and sizzly blood, and his mind is swallowed up in the "*History of Redemption*" and the "*Harmony of the Scriptures*,"—he is

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<sup>1</sup> Works, Vol. I. pp. 87—89.

much at a loss whether he ought to accept the Presidency of Nassau Hall; nevertheless, he will proceed "to ask advice of such as he esteems most wise, friendly, and faithful, with respect to the way of duty in this important affair."<sup>1</sup> How can we measure such a man? Is there a key that will unlock both mind and heart, and reveal his whole life and character?

In the vale of Chamouni, while gazing upon the awful sheen of Mont Blanc, I chanced to notice at my feet a tiny snowdrop peeping through the grass to catch the warmth of the sun. It recalled that curious calculation of Professor Whewell's, touching the adaptation of the force of gravity to the growth and sustentation of flowers, by which he proves that "an earth greater or smaller, denser or rarer, than the one on which we live, would require a change in the structure and strength of the footstalks of all the little flowers that hang their heads under our hedges;" so that we may consider "the whole mass of the earth, from pole to pole, and from circumference to center, as employed in keeping a snowdrop in the position most suited to the promotion of its vegetable health."<sup>1</sup> The same divine law that lifts the mountain to the skies feeds and sustains the humblest floweret of the vale. So when we gaze, with a feeling akin to awe, upon the "dilating mind" of Edwards, which, like some monarch mountain, "As in its natural form swelled vast to heaven," we recall his own exquisite picture of humility: "the soul of a true Christian appears like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year, low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy, standing peacefully and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms to drink in the light of the sun." His thoughts rose ever toward God; his heart abased itself ever before God, by the same divine law of dependence and adoration. He whose mind aspired

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<sup>1</sup> Works, Vol. I. p. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Bridgewater Treatise, Cap. III.

to grasp "God's last end in the Creation," etc., writes: "my heart panted after this, to lie low before God as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child."

In studying a character like that of Edwards we must guard against two quite opposite tendencies; a tendency toward an unquestioning veneration for the man as a whole, which would invest his character with impeccability and his teachings with infallibility; in other words, that tendency toward the canonization of saints and worthies which marks the Romish side of human nature; and that other tendency toward an empirical judgment of a character and life by individual qualities or defects, which marks the extreme Protestant side of human nature. Of the first we have an example in the Latin inscription by President Finley on the tombstone of Edwards at Princeton, and in these couplets of President Dwight:

"From scenes obscure did Heaven his *Edwards* call, —  
That moral *Newton*, and that second *Paul*, —  
Who, in one little life, the gospel more  
Disclosed than all earth's myriads kenne'd before."

Of which an early biographer of Edwards judiciously observes: "the reader will consider this proposition as *poetically strong*, but not as *literally accurate*."<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, if we take up the traits of Edwards piecemeal, and give to each or to any an exaggerated individuality, we shall form a character out of harmony with itself and with the reality. Reading, for example, in his resolutions and diary such expressions as these: "Resolved never to lose one moment of time;" "Resolved never to speak anything that is matter of laughter on the Lord's day;" "Resolved to inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year;" "Resolved to inquire every night, before I go to bed, whether I have acted in the

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards's Works, Vol. I. p. 98.

best way I possibly could with respect to *eating* and *drinking*;" "After the greatest *mortifications* I always find the greatest comfort;" "intend to live in continual *mortification* without ceasing," especially "in eating, drinking, and *sleeping*;" — reading such passages only, we should say: This is another Anthony in his desert cave,<sup>1</sup> or a Jerome in his student-cell at Bethlehem — a monk of the fourth century. Again, reading only his extatic descriptions of the love of God, of self-annihilation, and absorption into Christ, of almost supernatural visions of the glory and grace of God coming upon him in the fields and the groves, we should say: This is another Tauler or Gerson — a mystic of the Middle Ages.<sup>2</sup>

Or, reading only such resolves as these: "to endeavor to my utmost to act as I can think I should do if I had already seen the happiness of heaven and hell's torments;" "that I will act so, in every respect, as I think I shall wish I had done if I should at last be damned;" and such passages as these in his sermons: "God holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; you are ten thousand times as abominable in his eyes as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. . . . It is a great furnace of wrath that you hang over by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it and burn it asunder."

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<sup>1</sup> In one respect Anthony was strikingly like Edwards. Neander says of the Egyptian ascetic: "severe to himself, Anthony was mild to all others"; and President Finley wrote of Edwards: "pietate praeclarus, moribus suis severus, ast aliis aequus et benignus." Jerome, while differing from both in his asperity toward others, more resembled Edwards in his zeal for polemical theology, writing "many things against most of the prevailing errors of his day;" and also in his earnest study of the scriptures, upon the principles of "grammatico-logical interpretation."

<sup>2</sup> Tauler, while a mystic in speculation, was earnest and practical as a preacher; and Gerson was an energetic reformer. Edwards had both these qualities, while yet he seemed at times to lose himself in mystic contemplations and experiences of the divine love. These two phases of character—the devoutly mystical and the practical and reformatory—are often united in the same person.

“After you shall have endured the torments of hell millions of ages — when you shall have worn out the age of the sun, moon, and stars in your dolorous groans and lamentations — your bodies, which shall have been burning and wasting all this while in these glaring flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will remain to waste through an eternity yet;”<sup>1</sup> — reading such words only, we should say: This man was a fanatic in his creed, the very high priest of what Isaac Taylor styles “a malign theology.”

And yet again, when we hear him say: “I very often think with sweetness and longings and pantings of soul, of being a little child taking hold of Christ, to be led by him through the wilderness of this world. I love to think of coming to Christ to receive salvation of him, poor in spirit and quite empty of self, humbly exalting him alone, cut off entirely from my own root in order to grow into and out of Christ, to have God in Christ to be all in all, and to live by faith on the Son of God a life of humble, unfeigned confidence in him,”<sup>1</sup> — reading such sweet words, we should say: Here is no theological Torquemada, but a very Fenelon for gentleness of spirit and purity of love.

Reading only his treatise on Original Sin, which some theologians devour as eagerly as if it were itself the apple of Adam, so ready are they to fasten upon themselves participation in his transgression; or the essay on the Freedom of the Will, — touching which there has been the most wilful freedom of appropriation by opposing schools, — one would say: here is Augustine revived in his subtle metaphysics, here is Calvin again incarnate in logic. Then, turning from the metaphysical to the historical and devotional, we find in the crude outlines of his Work of Redemption — for his ideal of that book was never filled out — a conception worthy of the genius of a Michael Angelo, and the eloquence of a Macaulay. But it is a Michael Angelo digging out untried ochres from their

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<sup>1</sup> Sermons on “Sinners in the Hands of an angry God,” and the “Eternity of Hell Torments,” Works, Vol. VII. pp. 419, 496.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Edwards’s Works, Vol. I. p. 41.

native bed, and therewith mixing new colors for frescoes of magnificent proportion, which he might not live to finish; and the second Edwards, in his preface to this posthumous work of his father, reminds us that "as to elegance of composition, which is now esteemed so essential to all publications, it is well known that the author did not make that his chief study."

If we would group together gifts and characteristics so various and diverse, we may say with an appreciating critic: "Edwards was the instaurator of the science of theology. His independence as a thinker, and his power as a reasoner, the originality with which he struck out new principles and arguments, and the systematic order and demonstrative force with which he linked them together, have placed some of his theological works on the same high level with Euclid's Elements of Geometry. At the same time his private journal and some of his practical treatises evince a liveliness of imagination and a glow of emotion which, if cultivated, might have won for him a high niche in the temple of sacred poetry. Furthermore, these high endowments of reason and imagination were combined with a personal experience, with a knowledge of the human heart, with a power of discriminating character, and impressing truth, and realizing invisible objects, which made him the most powerful of preachers. And, to crown all, his intellectual gifts were guided and adorned by such integrity and piety, such moral and Christian graces, as are too seldom seen in union with genius, but when thus united, produce a constellation of surpassing brilliancy, and, even alone, shine with a lustre superior to genius itself."<sup>1</sup> President Davies speaks of him as "the *great* Mr. Edwards," and makes special mention of his "deep judgment" and "calm temper."

The external biography of Edwards is little to our present purpose. Graduating at Yale College in 1720, at the age of seventeen, licensed at nineteen to preach the gospel, he was designated for a pulpit in New York by a number of

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Tyler, in *Bib. Sac.* 1855, p. 295.

ministers in New England, who acted as a committee of supply for a congregation of Presbyterians in that city, who had withdrawn from the original congregation in Wall Street from disaffection towards its minister.<sup>1</sup> Thus early did Calvinistic Presbyterianism do homage to that New England whence it has ever since derived so much of its divinity, and so much of its intellectual power. Had Ed-

<sup>1</sup> The "Documentary History of New York" (Vol III. pp. 278—281) sheds some light upon this difficulty. In Sept. 1720, Rev. James Anderson, then minister of the Presbyterian Congregation in the city of New York, with the elders and deacons of the same, applied to the Captain-General of the Province to be incorporated as a congregation for "the free use and exercise of their said religion, in its true doctrine, discipline, and worship, according to the rules and methods of the established Presbyterian Church of North Britain." At the same time a memorial against this application was filed by Gilbert Livingston and Thomas Smith, who represent themselves as "persons most nearly concerned, and who have all along been deeply engaged in the carrying on the said work." They object that the charter in the form proposed "will confirm the meeting-house now building to the actual possession of the Rev. Mr. James Anderson as sole minister therein, and wholly bring it under the command of those that adhere to him"; they believe the church "under very languishing circumstances during Mr. Anderson's abode among us, whom we cannot but think, after more than two years trial, very unsuitable for advancing our interest in New York, because several that joined with us at first have forsaken the congregation upon his account, and we are also fully persuaded he has not been established among us by very just and honorable methods." Referring to "the temper of these men" who upheld Mr. Anderson, they set forth "how great a hardship this will be upon us who have borne the burden and heat of the day, to be turned off without so much as the privilege of bringing in a minister whom we may sit under with pleasure and delight, especially considering we think ourselves (notwithstanding all the advantages that have been taken against us) very little inferior either in number or quality to them who by their unfair proceedings have brought in Mr. Anderson." They humbly crave the privilege of the grant of a charter, "to have the meeting-house confirmed to us, and to the minister procured by us, at least on equal terms with those who first desired it."

The Anderson party prevailed, and it would seem that the remonstrants withdrew and formed a separate congregation. The controversy appears to have been partly between a Scotch and a New England element. In August 1772, the seceders invited young Edwards. They do not seem, however, to have attained to a corporate existence. In 1766 there is still but one Presbyterian Church in New York, and in a memorial for enlarged privileges, they refer to the great increase of the congregation "under the pastoral charge of Mr. Ebenezer Pemberton, the second minister thereof," the successor of the unacceptable Anderson. In that year, 1766, the associate congregation, since known as the Brick Church, was formed; the two congregations remaining for several years as one church, under the same associated *pastorate*.

wards, however, listened to the repeated calls of this infant congregation to become its pastor, the Presbyterian church as a whole might not have profited so much by the New England theology. But "the smallness of that society," only a few score of persons, perhaps not even organized into a church, and "some special difficulties," led Edwards to relinquish so unpromising a field. "Charitable contributions from the colony of Connecticut" had helped to buy the ground on which the First Presbyterian Church was built, and thirty years later that church, still divided in feeling, looked again to New England, and called Bellamy to its pulpit, but without success.

It was in the eight months of his sojourn in New York, in the maiden freshness of his ministry, that Edwards wedded his soul to Christ with a love that gives a tone of rhapsody to his diary and resolutions. The philosopher of half a century should not be held too closely by the ardent utterances of the novice of nineteen; and yet, in the peculiar character of these religious experiences is found a key to much of the after preaching and philosophizing at Northampton and Stockbridge. Could we find any memoranda of that favored John Smith who was the intimate companion of the youthful preacher, in his meditative walks and "sweet religious conversation" on the banks of Hudson's river, or any traditions among his descendants, we might gain a clearer view of Edwards at this moulding period of life. But those footsteps of piety on the river side were long ago effaced by the tide of population, and the name of John Smith repeats itself many hundred times in the New York Directory. Burying himself for three years in study as tutor at Yale, we find Edwards at twenty-three inaugurated in the pastoral office at Northampton as colleague with his maternal grandfather. The name of Solomon Stoddard is associated with "a particular tenet of the Lord's Supper" which gained much currency in Massachusetts. This was not, as is sometimes represented, the doctrine that the Lord's Supper may be used indiscriminately by *all* as a converting ordinance, throwing open the Table to

non-believers, but that the children of visible believers were "ecclesiastically holy," and that "they that are in external covenant with God [by baptism] if neither ignorant nor scandalous, may lawfully come to the Lord's Supper, though destitute of a saving work of God's Spirit on their hearts." As Mr. Stoddard explained his view, it was not that non-believers of whatever grade should use the Lord's Supper as a saving ordinance, but that those whom he regarded as nominally in church connection by baptism, though timid and unsatisfied as to their spiritual state, should use this ordinance as a means of grace. He preached earnestly and powerfully upon the necessity of regeneration and a holy life in order to salvation; <sup>1</sup> yet, practically, the church at Northampton was demoralized by Mr. Stoddard's doctrine and practice touching church-membership. The mind of Edwards, so rigid in self-scrutiny, so rich in its experience of divine grace, so abhorrent of sin in thought, emotion, or affection, so penetrated with the love of holiness as the ideal of the Christian, was scandalized at this mixed communion-table where the regenerate and the unregenerate partook upon equal terms of the same body and blood. With deference, however, to the views and position of his grandfather, and with a sound discretion, he refrained at first from controverting in the pulpit the usage of the church, searching the scriptures for further light, and devoting his ministry to such awakening, searching, and discriminating presentations of truth as might bring his hearers to an experience of the inner life of godliness. As the result of this style of preaching, and of God's favor upon such a ministry, we have the record of the two memorable revivals of 1734 and 1740 which Edwards has incorporated in his "Narrative of Surprising Conversions," and his "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion." A product of his pastoral experience in these scenes was the treatise on the Religious Affections, of which it has been said that if one can read it honestly through, without abandoning his Christian hope,

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<sup>1</sup> See the appendix to the author's Memoir of David Tappan Stoddard.

he need have no fear for the future. With a calm philosophical judgment upon evidence is here associated that rare spiritual insight which discerns motives and detects the lurking sophistries of the heart, so that every reader stands revealed to himself. In the introduction to this treatise Edwards declares his belief that "it is by the mixture of counterfeit religion with true, not discerned and distinguished, that the devil has had his greatest advantage against the cause and kingdom of Christ;" and adds, "by this he prevailed against New England, to quench the love and spoil the joy of her espousals, about one hundred years ago." He had reference here to the practice known as the Half-way Covenant, which came in during the last half of the seventeenth century, which admitted to baptism children of parents who themselves were baptized in infancy, though not in communion with the church; and the consequent practice of admitting such baptized persons to communion without visible evidence of regeneration. "The consideration of these things," says Edwards, "has long engaged me to attend to this matter with the utmost diligence and care, and exactness of search and inquiry, that I have been capable of. It is a subject on which my mind has been peculiarly intent ever since I first entered on the study of divinity." Thus the work of Edwards as a reformer in the spiritual life of the churches had its origin in his own early, vivid experience of the grace of God.

The growth of that experience, and the convictions consequent upon it, brought Edwards, in the forty-seventh year of his age and the twenty-fourth of his pastorate, to that crisis of his life which deprived Northampton of the ablest preacher of his time, and gave to New England the ablest of her theologians. "The great thing," says Edwards, "which I have scrupled in the established method of this church's proceeding, and *which I dare no longer go on in*, is their public assenting to the form of words rehearsed on occasion of their admission to the communion, without pretending thereby to mean any such thing as any hearty consent to the terms of the gospel covenant, or to mean

any such faith or repentance as belong to the covenant of grace, and are the grand conditions of that covenant." In other words, Edwards wished to free his church from formalism, worldliness, insincerity, hypocrisy, and to maintain in profession and in practice the just distinction between spiritual believers in and imitators of Christ, and persons of a worldly spirit, or mere nominal Christians. If a church of Christ exists for any rational purpose, it must be to make manifest this distinction. But in insisting upon reforming the practice of his church in this particular, Edwards betrayed no narrow, dogmatic, bigoted spirit, but manifested an enlightened charity and a Christian gentleness. He would have been satisfied to receive church members upon a simple and broad declaration of the substantial things of faith, if borne out by a sincere and devout life. "For I call that a profession of godliness," he says, "which is a profession of *the great things wherein godliness consists*, and not a profession of one's own opinion of his good estate." . . . . And he adds, "that in whatever inquiries are made, and whatever accounts are given, neither minister nor church are to set up themselves as searchers of hearts, but are to accept the serious, solemn profession of the well-instructed professor (of a good life), as best able to determine what he finds in his own heart."<sup>1</sup>

Unless a church of Christ can properly demand a credible profession of "the great things wherein godliness consists," as a condition of membership, we may as well fall back upon the notion of John Adams, that religion consists simply in having a conscience. Adams wrote to Jefferson: "The most abandoned scoundrel that ever existed never yet wholly extinguished his conscience, and while conscience remains there is some religion. Popes, Jesuits, and Sorbonists, and inquisitors, have some conscience and some religion. So had Marius, and Sylla, Cæsar, Catiline, and Antony, and Augustus had not much more." In all this Adams meant to cavil at the common doctrine of man's

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Farewell Sermon at Northampton, and correspondence touching the same.

depravity and need of regeneration. But is there any tenable ground between the doctrine of Edwards, that a church of Christ should include only such as profess the great things wherein godliness consists, and this notion of Adams, that would recognize popes, pirates, and pagans as religious, because human nature everywhere retains "indelible marks of conscience"? Does the fact that a man has a conscience, and is therefore capable of knowing right and wrong, capable of responsibility, and therefore capable of *sinning*, does that fact make a man *religious*, and qualify him for membership in the church of Christ? But this principle of Edwards, and the attempt to apply it to members and manners in his own church, provoked an unhappy controversy, which issued in his dismissal from Northampton. Then the reformed churches of Christendom were pretty much against him. No orthodox congregational church now questions the soundness of his position. When Dr. Bellamy was called, in 1754, to the First Presbyterian Church in New York, one of the prominent members of the church wrote him that if his views as to church communion were like those of Mr. Edwards, his coming "will infallibly make the rent in the church wider than it is, as the bulk of the people are against that sentiment." So much for the boasted superiority of "the Presbyterian way" in keeping the churches pure.

In six years of retirement at Stockbridge, in a mission to the Indians, Edwards produced the works that have given him his lasting reputation as a metaphysician and divine. A critical analysis of these works does not fall within our present scope, since our object is not a critical estimate of Edwards himself as a mental philosopher and divine, but a popular view of the salient points of his system in their bearing upon New England theology, and his influence on the moral and religious life of his own denomination and that of Christendom. The theology of Edwards may be stated in popular terms as *Calvinism harmonized with reason, with moral intuitions, and with the scriptures*; or a liberalized, rationalized, and harmonized Calvinism. His

greatest works were called forth by the Arminian controversy, and were projected with that view as early as 1747.<sup>1</sup> Believing that, *as a system*, Calvinism and not Arminianism is the theology of the Bible, Edwards sought to establish the harmony of its doctrines with reason and his own moral intuitions. This he did especially in two fundamental particulars, viz. that *sin* is strictly *the personal and voluntary act of the sinner*, and that *certainty*, with all its related doctrines of dependence, is consistent with *freedom*. Edwards sometimes applies the term *depravity* to that deteriorated constitution, by reason of which the posterity of Adam, left to themselves, *act* the bidding of their lower propensities; but he firmly held that man's *duty* is measured and limited by his *natural* ability to do that which is required of him, and that sin is the act of the will in choosing the wrong. In order to reconcile this with his notion of the connection of the race with Adam's transgression, which all divines of his school admit in *some* form, he adopted the theory of the literal oneness of the race with Adam in "one complex person, one moral whole," and hence of our actual participation in his guilt—not an inherited or transmitted *guilt*, but a theoretical participation in Adam's sin as one moral person, our individual consciousness and responsibility therefor being manifested by our "full and perfect *consent of heart* to it" in our first voluntary act.

There has been much misapprehension of Edwards's doctrine of "original sin," for want of a careful study of his terms as explained by himself in the course of his treatise on that subject. Augustine held, literally, that all *sinned* in Adam, because by his oriental theory of the simultaneous existence of the whole human family in Adam and of the propagation of souls,—this last being held by the Druzes at the present day, and belonging to the psychological systems of Persia and India,—he could speculate himself into the belief that the human race were literally in the loins of Adam. The Princeton divines, on the contrary, hold that Adam's sin

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<sup>1</sup> Letter to Erskine, Dwight's Memoir, p. 250.

is ours, not in any sense of personal participation in his guilt, but by a divine imputation which holds and treats us as guilty of the sin of our first parent, because of his representative character as the federal head of the race. The view of Edwards differs from both. When carefully analyzed it is found to have nothing in common with the Princeton doctrine of imputation without actual participation. He taught that the imputation is *because* of the actual *guilt* of posterity in the first transgression. But, on the other hand, Edwards did not hold to a participation by actual presence "in the loins of Adam," as did Augustine, but to a mystical participation through one complex moral person. By this metaphysical fiction Edwards maintained his self-consistency upon the cardinal point of the freedom of the human will in sinning. Though he does not always use the same terms with philosophical precision, yet when he really defines his position, it is plain that he did not hold either to a depravity in which there is no personal guilt, or to a transmitted or imputed guilt in which there was no personal participation. In Part iv. chap. ii. of the treatise on Original Sin, Edwards shows that "when God created man at first he implanted in him two kinds of principles;" — the *inferior* or *natural*, "being the principles of mere human nature," and the *superior* principles, "that were spiritual, holy, and divine, summarily comprehended in divine love;" — and that Adam sinned by suffering "the inferior principles of self-love and natural appetite, which were given only to serve," to supplant the superior and to become reigning principles.<sup>1</sup> Edwards does not regard the inferior principles in man's constitution as in themselves sinful, but as belonging to a well-balanced nature. "The superior principles were given to possess the throne, and maintain an absolute dominion in the heart: the other to be wholly subordinate and subservient. And while things continued thus, all things were in excellent order, peace, and beautiful harmony, and in their proper and perfect state." But, as Edwards proceeds to

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout these quotations the *italics* are those of Edwards.

show, when man exalted the gratification of his inferior passions above the rules and limits of the divine law of holiness, then man's total corruption of heart ensued, "*without God's putting any evil into his heart, or implanting any bad principle, or infusing any corrupt taint, and so becoming the author of depravity.* Only God's *withdrawing*, as it was highly proper and necessary that he should, from rebel man; being, as it were, driven away by his abominable wickedness, and men's *natural* principles being *left to themselves*, this is sufficient to account for his becoming entirely corrupt, and bent on sinning against God. And as Adam's nature became corrupt without God's implanting or infusing any evil thing into his nature; so does the nature of his posterity. God dealing with Adam as the head of his posterity (as has been shown), and treating them as one, he deals with his posterity as having *all sinned in him*. And therefore as God withdrew spiritual communion, and his vital, gracious influence from the common head, so he withholds the same from all the members, as they come into existence; whereby they come into the world mere *flesh*, and entirely under the government of natural and inferior principles; and so become wholly corrupt as Adam did."

'This is neither more nor less than Dr. Taylor means when he speaks of the balance of constitutional propensities as being so disturbed in the posterity of Adam, in consequence of his sin, that all men invariably sin in their first moral act, and in every succeeding act until renewed by the Holy Spirit. Mankind, with one consent, yield to an inordinate self-love, and thus, in their natural state, are "entirely under the government of natural and inferior principles." Equally explicit is Edwards in defining the relation of Adam's sin to his posterity, so as to retain the doctrine that sin is always the personal voluntary act of the sinner. "*The first existing* of a corrupt disposition in their hearts is not to be looked upon as sin belonging to them, *distinct* from their participation of Adam's first sin; it is, as it were, the *extended pollution* of that sin through the whole tree, by virtue of the constituted *union* of the branches with the root;

or the *inherence* of the sin of that head of the species in the members, in the consent and concurrence of the hearts of the members with the head in that first act." This *consent and concurrence* are always with Edwards essential to the fact of sin. For, he continues, "the derivation of the evil disposition to the hearts of Adam's posterity, or rather the *coexistence* of the evil disposition, implied in Adam's first rebellion, in the *root and branches*, is a consequence of the *union* that the wise author of the world has established between Adam and his posterity; but not properly a *consequence* of the *imputation* of his sin; nay, rather *antecedent* to it, as it was in Adam himself. The first depravity of heart, and the imputation of that sin, are both the consequences of that established union, but yet in such order that the evil disposition is *first*, and the charge of guilt *consequent*, as it was in the case of Adam himself.<sup>1</sup>

The following statement clearly marks the distinction between the theory of imputation held by Edwards, and that propounded by the Princeton divines. "From what has been observed, it may appear there is no sure ground to conclude that it must be an absurd and impossible thing for the race of mankind truly to partake of the *sin* of the first apostasy, so as that this, in reality and propriety, shall become *their* sin, by virtue of a real *union* between the root and branches of the world of mankind (truly and properly availing to such a consequence), established by the Author of the whole system of the universe, — to whose establishments are owing all propriety and reality of *union* in any part of that system, — and by virtue of the full *consent* of the hearts of Adam's posterity to that first apostasy. And therefore the sin of the apostasy is not theirs merely because God *imputes* it to them, but it is *truly* and *properly* theirs; and on that *ground* God imputes it to them." This statement, as italicized by Edwards himself, shows how resolutely he held that the personal voluntary act of the individual is essential to any imputation to him of the sin of Adam.

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<sup>1</sup> "Original Sin," Part IV., Chap. iii.

True, we can no more conceive of this "one moral person" as an entity, than we can conceive of that "organic humanity" apart from the individuals of the species, or of that "coming Man," of which philosophers of another school continually speak. Yet the theory of Edwards, however impossible its mystical conception to plain common sense, has the merit of self-consistency upon the vital point that sin is voluntary. Whatever that is in human nature — disorder, disturbance, propensity — that precedes, and even leads to, voluntary wrong action, Edwards does not call it sin. He speaks of certain inferior and involuntary principles which belong to the nature of man, such as self-love and natural appetites and passions, which are "like fire in a house, a good servant but a bad master; very useful while kept in its place, but if left to take possession of the whole house, soon brings all to destruction." These propensities meant for good, in the original constitution of man, are perverted to evil, since the withdrawal of spiritual influences, consequent upon the fall. "Man did set up himself, and the objects of his private affections and appetites as supreme; and so they took the place of God." The doctrine which Edwards really maintained, through all the mysticism of his theory of imputation, — that sin consists in voluntary action, and that mere constitutional propensities, however liable to perversion, are not in themselves sinful, has thoroughly penetrated the New England Theology. But we do not know of any respectable New England divine who clings to the mystic notion of "one moral person" in Adam; while the notion of hereditary depravity, or the taint of evil transmitted by mere physical law, is pretty much left to Mr. Emerson in his "Conduct of Life," and Dr. Holmes in his rattlesnake story, — the latest specimen of "mythical theology," in which a serpent appears, not as the tempter, but as the author of evil in man. Both these gentlemen teach that the taint of evil *runs in the blood*, — a dogma which Edwards and the standard Orthodox divines have long ago repudiated as contrary to reason, and abhorrent to our intuitions of the divine justice and good-

ness. The doctrine that sin is a matter of entailment by natural law belongs fairly to that materialistic philosophy which makes man and the universe alike creatures of an invisible and irresistible law. The doctrine that sin is the voluntary transgression of the moral law of an all-wise and all-holy Being, belongs to that rational and elevated conception of man which invests him with power to do right or wrong, as a free, capable, and therefore responsible, subject of the government of God.

The mind of Edwards has also impressed itself upon the New England theology in his mode of harmonizing Freedom and Certainty, or in his own phraseology, *Liberty and Necessity*. Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, with his striking antithesis, says: "If we must accept Fate, we are not less compelled to affirm Liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty, the power of character. This is true, and that other is true. . . . We are sure that, though we know not how, necessity does comport with liberty, the individual with the world, my polarity with the spirit of the times. The riddle of the age has for each a private solution." Mr. Emerson would solve the riddle by asserting each factor to the full—the "irresistible dictation of Fate," the "formidable power of will,"—and then placing these side by side to correct "any excess of emphasis." Edwards dove deeper, and brought up that pearly thought of "*moral necessity*," which is the purchase of our freedom. Moral necessity—the simple necessity given in *certainty*,—this, as the second Edwards says, "implies, and in all cases secures, the *consent* of the will; and *natural* necessity cannot possibly affect the will or any of its exercises." In the realm of volition there is no such thing as what Mr. Emerson styles Fate, or irresistible dictation.

An analysis of the "Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will" would be foreign to our present design, which is to show, in a general way, the influence of Edwards upon the theology of his own and later times. No better summing up of that treatise could be given than is furnished by the author in his "Letter to a Minister of the Church of Scot-

land," appended to most editions of the "Inquiry." Edwards defines liberty as "*the power, opportunity, or advantage that any one has to do as he pleases, or conducting in any respect, according to his pleasure; without considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is.*" By this Edwards meant to assert the highest liberty "consistent with the nature of a rational, intelligent, designing agent." This liberty Edwards maintained is consistent with that previous *certainty* of action which he describes as *moral necessity*,—thus qualifying a term which is liable to "perversion and misapplication." He declares that "the connection between antecedent things and consequent ones, which takes place with regard to the acts of men's wills, which is called moral necessity, is called by the name of *necessity* improperly, . . . . and that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's wills, is more properly called *certainty*, than *necessity*; it being no other than the certain connection between the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms their existence." And he adds, with emphasis: "Nothing that I maintain supposes that men are at all hindered by any fatal necessity from doing, and even willing and choosing, as they please, with full freedom, yea, with the highest degree of liberty that ever was thought of, or that ever could possibly enter into the heart of any man to conceive;" and again, "such a moral necessity of men's actions as I maintain, is not at all inconsistent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as a free, accountable, moral agent, and subject of moral government." It was by establishing this distinction between certainty and natural necessity that Edwards silenced the Arminians of his day, and restored Calvinism to its supremacy in the realm of biblical and philosophical theology. Isaac Taylor, while he criticises the "Inquiry" of Edwards as giving *occasion* to the fatalists against Christianity, and by "mingling what is purely abstract with facts belonging to the physiology of the human mind," and "metaphysical demonstrations with scriptural evidence," impairing its own "consistency as a philosophical argument,"—nevertheless awards it the praise of a "classic" in meta-

physics, because of its "exact analysis," its "penetrative abstraction," and its "philosophic calmness." He gives it as his deliberate judgment that "Edwards achieved his immediate object — that of demolishing the Arminian notion of contingency, as the blind law of human volitions; and he did more than this, for he effectively redeemed the doctrines called Calvinistic from that scorn with which the irreligious party, within and without the pale of Christianity, had been used to treat them." Of the bearing of the Inquiry upon Calvinism, this thoughtful critic further says: "Notwithstanding this accidental result of the argument for moral causation [its perversion by deistical and atheistical writers], as conducted by Edwards, this treatise must be allowed to have achieved an important service for Christianity, inasmuch as it has stood like a bulwark in front of principles which, whether or not they may hitherto have been stated in the happiest manner, are of far deeper meaning than is any sectarian scheme of doctrine, and apart from which, or if they were disowned, the Christian community would not long make good its opposition to infidelity. If Calvinism, using the term in its modern sense, were exploded, a long time would not elapse before evangelical doctrine of every sort would find itself driven into the gulf that had yawned to receive its rival.

"Whatever notions of an exaggerated sort may belong to some Calvinists, Calvinism encircles or involves great truths which, whether defended in scriptural simplicity of language or not, will never be abandoned while the Bible continues to be devoutly read; and which if they might indeed be driven out of sight, would drag to the same ruin every doctrine of revealed religion. As much as this might be affirmed and made good; although he who should undertake to say it were so to conduct his argument as might make six Calvinists in seven his enemies."<sup>1</sup>

The power of Edwards as a preacher lay largely in his views of *the nature of sin and of moral agency*. In address-

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<sup>1</sup> "Logic in Theology," p. 9.

sing a congregation he felt that he was speaking, not to machines that could move only as they were moved upon, nor to atoms held by some eternal law or fate, but to *men* who were both capable of volition or choice, and had "liberty to act according to their choice," to men who, because of this power of free agency, were severally and personally guilty of sin, responsible to God, and under obligation to repent and obey. Hence it was that Edwards came into such close quarters with the consciences of his hearers, and urged the truth upon them with such force of logic and earnestness of conviction. His view of sin, and especially his estimate of his own sins, has been thought exaggerated and extravagant by those who regard sin as a mere creature of accident or circumstance, a fault of education, or a defect of physical constitution. But when we look upon God as a being of infinite wisdom, purity, and love, the rightful head and sovereign of the universe, who has given a *law* of perfect wisdom, equity, and love, obedience to which would make all creatures supremely happy, and then look upon man as pitting his will and his selfish interests and desires against such a being and such a law; when we think of a pride that would set up the *Ego* above the universe and above its Lord, — till it rises to the audacious announcement of the Hegelian professor, "To-morrow, gentlemen, I will make God," — we find no terms too strong for a holy mind to express its detestation and abhorrence of sin.

In like manner, his view of moral agency enabled Edwards to use the *doctrine of divine sovereignty* with great practical effect in his preaching. He was not hampered by a materialistic fatalism, nor by an arbitrary predestinarianism. He held that the world "is in all things subject to the disposal of an intelligent, wise agent that presides, not as the soul of the world, but as the sovereign Lord of the universe, governing all things by proper will, choice, and design, in the exercise of the most perfect liberty conceivable, without subjection to any constraint, or being properly under the power or influence of anything before, above, or without himself;" and yet this universal sovereignty — altogether different

from the "irresistible dictation of fate" — he held to be "consistent with whatever *liberty* is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege, or benefit, or anything desirable in any respect for any intelligent creature." Therefore Edwards, recognizing man's absolute freedom in sinning, and his full natural ability to obey God, could make the sinner feel that his dependence upon divine grace, arising out of his moral aversion to holiness, was at once his encouragement and his peril, an incitement to hope and a warning against presumption; that the sovereignty of God is at once to be loved and to be feared.

And so, again, the view that Edwards held of sin and free agency led to his strong convictions touching *the future punishment of the ungodly*. Nowhere in the writings of Protestant divines is the doctrine of eternal punishment set forth in terms so vivid and earnest as are found in the sermons of Jonathan Edwards. Some of his expressions upon this subject — such as are quoted above — are in violation of all modern canons of taste. But such grossness of imagery, and such details of merely physical horrors, were in accordance with the standards of literature in his age. His sermon on Joseph's temptation and deliverance could not well be read aloud in the presence of woman and ingenuous youth. Yet it was preached from the pulpit of Northampton by a man of singular pureness of heart and life, with a view to the reformation of manners. But how much of the English literature of the latter part of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth must now be expurgated, not only because bald and coarse in manner, but also, as Macaulay characterizes it, "foul and ignoble" in spirit, at once "inelegant and inhuman." Inelegant and inhuman! No severer judgment than this could be pronounced upon Edwards's comparison of a sinner to a spider roasting over the flames. Let us not visit upon the pulpit alone vices of style that belonged largely to the age.

On the point in question the Reformation had not wholly purified religious literature from the materialistic conceptions of hell which abounded in the Romish Church in the

Middle Ages. That church, dealing with rude unlettered minds, had recourse to a *pictorial* language which we have outgrown, but whose influence we trace far down in Protestant theology. We cannot, therefore, charge Edwards with a malign spirit or "a malign theology," because he wrote according to the standards of his age. His was not a mind of the highest literary culture. His books were few, and these chiefly professional and controversial;— he speaks of himself as in "a remote part of the world" with respect to literature, — and his taste, though equal to the most delicate perception of beauty, was often crude and homely in expression. In treating of future punishment his fault lay in literalizing and amplifying the vivid and intense figures of the Bible upon this subject. Enough of woe in the declaration of Christ that "at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." It helps not the impressiveness of these few words for human imagination to surround them with inquisitorial devices of torture. Rather should we meditate in silent awe upon the stupendous woe couched in such words from the lips of love. The figure of fire, in the scriptures, represents a reality more terrible than itself; to literalize the figure in detail lessens its moral force.

But if the rhetoric and the imagination of Edwards were somewhat in fault in his awful sermons on future punishment, his logic was not in fault from his premises of sin, free agency, holiness, and the moral government of God. Men speak slightingly of sin as too insignificant an act to deserve eternal punishment. But what act is so momentous in its character and bearings? Insignificant? Because the soul of man is so *great* in its powers, its capacities, its possibilities; because free agency is so *great* as an attribute of man; because God is so *great* in his holiness, which is love; because his law is so *great* in its purity and righteousness, which are also love; therefore sin is so GREAT in its malignity and its destructiveness, and deserves a punishment great as the love it has outraged, and the law it has

defied; and therefore the work of Christ in delivering the soul from so great sin and so great punishment, is the great mystery of divine love which angels desire to look into. The scheme of Edwards is logically consistent: his starting-point the excellency and the blessedness of holiness, and man's power and obligation to attain thereto; hence the guilt of apostasy; hence the need of redemption and of regeneration; hence the righteousness of condemnation upon the unbelieving; and hence also the crowning joy to faith and love in heaven. Such a system exalts man in capacity even while it abases him in character. It exalts God in the sovereignty of his holiness and justice, while yet it attempts that sovereignty with benignity and grace. It exalts Christ as the one Mediator between God and man, reconciling the righteousness of God with the justifying of the penitent and believing soul.

In estimating the theology of Edwards, however, we should remember that he did not write or plan a theological *system*; that his contributions to theology as a *science* were chiefly upon a few leading points to which his attention was turned by his own experience as a pastor, or by the controversies of his time; and therefore, as is usual in controversial writings, the points in dispute are urged with an emphasis out of proportion to their place in a general system, while other points are treated in the common technical language, without rigid scientific discrimination. Hence we must not be surprised at finding in Edwards errors, and even contradictions, upon topics that he had not elaborated with the care he bestowed upon certain leading inquiries, or at finding scholastic or traditionary expressions not in harmony with his prevailing philosophy. Hence his theology must be ascertained, not by distorting isolated expressions, but by mastering its general scope, with special reference to the theology that preceded it. *That* theology, a compound of Antinomianism and Arminianism, had run itself out in the spiritual inaction and general formalism of the churches. Edwards, rejecting the doctrines of man's inability and of ecclesiastical grace, brought in a new type

of theology which has ever since marked the New England divinity.

From this fragmentary outline of his life and writings it is evident that Orthodox Congregationalism is largely indebted to Jonathan Edwards for that *spiritual reformation of the eighteenth century*, which restored to practice the primitive idea of a church as a fellowship of believers in Christ; not an hereditary state, or an outward condition to which men are introduced by birth or baptism; not a civil institution existing by any alliance, direct or indirect, with the state, but a society of believers, held together by consent of heart, in faith, love, and purity, under the headship of one Lord and Master, even Christ. This principle, so scriptural, so just, so necessary to the purity and vitality of a Christian church, was clearly enunciated by the synod of elders and messengers held at Cambridge in 1648. "The matter of a visible church are saints by calling, i.e. such as have not only attained the knowledge of the principles of religion, and are free from gross and open scandals, but also do, together with the profession of their faith and repentance, walk in blameless obedience to the word, so as that in charitable discretion they may be accounted saints by calling." But this idea of a church constitution had well nigh fallen into disuse in New England when Edwards rediscovered it by a patient and prayerful study of the scriptures. No sooner was his own mind clear as to the New Testament constitution of a church, than he modestly but conscientiously avowed his opinions, though he thereby alienated many friends in his own parish, and among neighboring ministers, and excited a controversy that led to his dismissal from Northampton. As early as 1749 he wrote to his correspondent Erskine, in Scotland: "A very great difficulty has arisen between my people relating to qualifications for communion at the Lord's table. My honored grandfather Stoddard, my predecessor in the ministry over this church, strenuously maintained the Lord's supper to be a converting ordinance, and urged all to come who were not of scandalous life, though they knew themselves to be unconverted.

I formerly conformed to his practice, but I have had difficulties with respect to it, which have been long increasing, till I dared no longer to proceed on in the former way, which has occasioned great uneasiness among my people, and has filled all the country with noise."

This conscientious regard for the authority of the scriptures and for the spirituality of the churches cost Edwards his personal ease and his pastoral office; but with unflinching courage he maintained the right, and thus recovered the congregational churches of New England from a demoralizing worldliness and formalism. It was the very spirit of heroism, the spirit that under a Mary, a James, or a Charles would have made him a confessor or a martyr, that led him to hazard all, and at last to relinquish all, through a conscientious obedience to the word of God. Every son of the Puritans, who has not degenerated into a bigot, will admire and honor that act of Jonathan Edwards.

The influence of Edwards upon New England Congregationalism is to be traced also in *that vigorous use of logic which characterizes its theology and its pulpit*. The province of reason in theology, — which has perplexed some more recent divines, — Edwards defined by his 11th and 28th Resolutions. "*Resolved*, when I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can toward solving it, if circumstances do not hinder." He knew that there were theorems in divinity yet unsolved by any theological formula, and felt that it was his duty to do what he could towards solving them. This was his province as a teacher in Christ's house. Resolved "to study the scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same." These early resolutions define what was one grand endeavor of Edwards in after-life, — a *rational Biblical theology*. Edwards was never restrained from the philosophical investigation of revealed truth by the fear of intruding reason into the province of faith. "There is no need," said he, "that the strict philosophic truth should be at all concealed from men; no danger in *contemplation and profound discov-*

ery in these things." He would not have the friends of the great truths of the Gospel "obliged to dodge, shuffle, hide, and turn their backs," because they could not meet their adversaries in the field of metaphysical discussion. The investigating spirit, ever resolving new theorems in divinity yet ever loyal to the authority of the scriptures and to the great system of evangelical doctrine wrought out by the ages, — this characteristic feature of New England theology, is that wherein Edwards chiefly lives in his successors; and where these two traits are fairly combined in a theological instructor, there is a school of Edwards, even though in some respects his own phraseology may be superseded. Hopkins says of his teacher and friend: "He studied the Bible more than all other books, and more than most other divines do. He took his religious principles from the Bible, and not from any human system or body of divinity. Though his principles were Calvinistic, yet he called no man father. He thought and judged for himself, and was truly very much of an original."<sup>1</sup> Yet some who now-a-days affect the guardianship of the Edwardean theology, look upon an original mode of stating the doctrine of depravity as even more heinous than original sin.

We owe much to Edwards in the way of *harmonizing the theology of the Bible with the reason and the moral intuition of man*. Some find that theology hard to be understood, and therefore treat it as a mystery, not to be investigated. Some, failing to reconcile it with their reason or their intuitions, reject it, and the Bible with it. Some seek to explain away the more obvious theology of the Bible, derogating from the authority of the book, and using it only as it may serve their own rational eclecticism. Edwards did neither. While he saw the doctrines and their difficulties he mastered both, and held fast by his moral intuitions on the one hand, and the doctrines of the Bible on the other, till he bound them together by a compact and glowing chain of logic. "From my childhood up," he says, "my mind had been full

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<sup>1</sup> Life of Edwards, p. 47. Ed. 1799.

of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life and rejecting whom he pleaseth. . . . It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men according to his sovereign pleasure." This Edwards afterwards ascribed to a divine influence upon his heart; but he also adds, "now I *saw* further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. My mind rested in it, and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. . . . I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet." Let no one reject that doctrine as contrary to reason, till he has at least mastered Jonathan Edwards on God's end in Creation and the Freedom of the Will. Edwards was the great exemplar of New England theologians, in teaching how

" We may assert eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men."

But he shines no less brightly as an example of personal holiness. Jonathan Edwards had an affinity for all that is pure and good. In his youth, while himself enjoying the highest experiences of the religious life, hearing of one whose spirituality of mind was as remarkable as her beauty of person, he wrote: "They say there is a young lady in New Haven who is beloved by that Great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything except to meditate on him, that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven, being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight forever."

Thirty-five years after, Edwards, dying at Princeton, away from his family, left for that same lady this parting message: "Give my kindest love to my dear wife, and tell her that the uncommon union which has so long subsisted between us has been of such a nature as, I trust, is spiritual, and therefore will continue forever."

A few months later that Great Being who had loved Sarah Pierrepont Edwards from a little child, "loving her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always," called her also to be with him. Hardly had the cloud of sorrow gathered over her,

"When, sudden, from the cleaving skies,  
A gleam of glory broke,"

and she departed, to be ravished with divine love and delight. Her body was laid beside her husband, and those two holy souls were joined again in a spiritual union that shall last forever.

One theological seminary preserves as a relic the old doorstep of the house where Edwards was born; another guards with sacred jealousy the stone that marks his grave. But that great intellect towers above all limitations of place and time, and the saintly purity of that life still blooms as the white flower at its side.