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IMPUTATION, FREE-WILL, AND GENERAL ATONEMENT.

"I love the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and always loved it. I do not concur in all the peculiarities of the Old Calvinism, nor did I ever."—*Cardinal Spring, Life & Times, I. 271.*

"Old Calvinists themselves are not agreed upon the question whether mediate or immediate imputation is the doctrine of the Bible, or of the Churches of the Reformation."—*Ibid. I. 8.*

"The Church can accept no human creed as a final and permanent document. She must always vindicate her right to revise, to purge, to add. We lie open to the teachings of the Divine Spirit, and believe in the progressive advancement of the Church, into a more perfect knowledge of the truth. It is the Word of God only which abideth forever. Otherwise we are in bondage to our Confession, and renounce the liberty which Christ hath made us free."—*Modelator's Address, Scottish Free Church Assembly, 1866.*

Upon the doctrine of Imputation, or, more definitely, the connection between the moral condition of the individual sinner and the fall of our first parents, it may be questioned if the Confession itself is consistent. The two Catechisms declare broadly that mankind sinned in, and fell with, Adam—(L. C., Q. 22; S. C., Q. 16.) They say nothing whatever of the "imputation" of Adam's sin to his posterity, notwithstanding the later-made index refers us to those parts of the Catechisms under the word "imputation." Both Catechisms, at least at this point, necessarily imply the doctrine, afterwards fully wrought out by the great Jonathan Edwards, of the personal identity of Adam and his posterity.

The Confession, however, Sec. VI, seems to take a different and a far more common-sense view. It says of our first parents:—"They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed," &c. Adam and Eve may well be called the root, which draws a sound distinction between them and their posterity. The realistic authors of the Catechisms would hardly have fallen into such language. Yet when we come to the sixth paragraph of this section, in which "Original Sin" is declared to be a transgression of the law of God as truly as actual sin, we confess ourselves at a stand again. We cannot believe that the Westminster divines meant to teach that native depravity—that a quality of the soul, is a transgression. Hence they must have meant by the phrase "original sin," Adam's first sin, viewed either as his own act, or, in the sense of the Catechisms and of the philosophy of Jonathan Edwards, as the act of the entire human family in him. In this section of the Confession, therefore, there seems to be a mingling of the two ideas of mediate and immediate imputation, while the Catechisms are clearly upon the ground of the immediate; in fact, holding up the idea of identity so strongly that the word imputation is not employed by them at all in reference to Adam's sin. Moreover, the sixth section of the Confession does not speak of the imputation of Adam's sin at all. It says (paragraph 3) the guilt of Adam's sin was imputed. So, also, both Catechisms, when the question is asked as to the sinfulness of the fallen state, reply first of all that it consists, not in the sin, but "in the guilt of Adam's first sin;" they also seem to open the door to the idea of mediate imputation. Now there certainly is a difference between imputed guilt and imputed sin, and if we may understand the word "guilt" in the sense of liability to suffering for the sin of oneself or another, then the guilt of Adam's sin would mean liability to suffering in consequence of the sin of Adam.

If such was the intent of the Westminster divines in the use of this language, then they certainly did not mean to shut up those who subscribed to the Standards to the realistic idea of the identity of the race with Adam; they did not mean to insist on holding the race responsible as criminal for their first parents' sin. But let us bear one who will not be suspected of a disposition to interpret the Bible or the Confession in a New School sense,—we refer to Dr. Hodge, of Princeton Seminary. In the new edition of his Commentary—"revised and in great measure re-written," as we are told on the title page, and published less than three years ago, he says, page 279, on imputation: "This doctrine does not include the idea of a mysterious identity of Adam and his race; nor that of a transfer of the moral turpitude of his sin to his descendants. It does not teach that his offence was personally or properly the sin of all men, or that his act was,

in any mysterious sense, the act of his posterity. . . . The sin of Adam, therefore, is no ground to us of remorse. . . . This doctrine merely teaches that, in virtue of the union, representative and natural, between Adam and his posterity, his sin is the ground of their condemnation, that is, of their subjection to penal evils." Any idea of guilt implied in the word condemnation the Professor instantly explains as subjection to penal evils. He quotes with approval the saying of Owen: "to be *aliena culpa reus* MAKES NO MAN A SINNER." The emphasis is his own. He also says: "To impute sin is to regard and treat as a sinner." (Page 284.) All idea—as it seems to us—of moral turpitude is excluded in his conception of the relation in which we stand to Adam's first sin. Dr. Hodge, having accepted the Confession of Faith on the Old School platform, must see room for his view in that instrument, or he must believe that its teachings on this point are not among "the essential and necessary articles" of the system. It is not generally supposed that Dr. Hodge's views are latitudinarian; we do not think they are, although on this point we believe he has been unconsciously liberalized by the air of American Presbyterianism from which he could not altogether isolate himself. It is not with his view nor with the true view, according to Dr. Hodge, that Prof. Stuart or Mr. Barnes are in controversy, but with the false view, based on the doctrine of the identity of the human family with Adam, or on the doctrine of the transfer of moral character.

We now subjoin Mr. Barnes' statement of this doctrine, made in his Defence: "To impute sin to a man which he never committed, is one thing; to impute the guilt of sin, that is, an exposure to judicial suffering, is another thing. . . . If what is meant, then, by the phrase 'the guilt of this sin is imputed,' or reckoned to his posterity be that they are liable, as they come into the world to evils which are designed to express God's abhorrence of sin; that they are born with a depraved nature; that they will sin as soon as they begin to act as moral agents, whenever that may be and in whatever world they may be placed, that without renewal they cannot be saved, and that all this is designed to exhibit God's abhorrence of sin, then I have not denied it, but have taught it. That all the sufferings to which the posterity of Adam are subjected in consequence of sin, are designed as evils of a judicial nature, intended to set forth his abhorrence of the crime, I have no doubt." Mr. Barnes denies that the sin of Adam, that is, his transgression and criminality, has been imputed to his posterity. So we think, in the quotations we have given, most plainly does Dr. Hodge. Mr. Barnes believes in our liability to judicial suffering on account of Adam's sin; Dr. Hodge believes in a subjection to penal evils; both differ, in our opinion, from the plain meaning of the Catechisms which teach, in the true spirit of realism, that we sinned in Adam.

If this be latitudinarianism, those who think so are welcome to make the most of it.

We confess, we are ashamed of these trivialities. We are ashamed for Calvinism—misrepresented by hair-splitting logicians as a dry scholastic system, as a stiff suit of mediæval armor, fitting close, over every faculty of mind and heart. But we must needs add a few sentences to set the views commonly called "New School," in such a light as to show, that a genuine Calvinism is consistent with a reasonable liberty of opinion; just as a mountain may have a heart of unchanging granite and a surface of endless variety and beauty.

One of the standing objections which men instinctively make to Calvinism, is the sweeping denial of human freedom, which is regarded as an essential part of the system by many of its friends and enemies alike. And yet the Confession itself has a section (IX) entitled "Of Free Will." And the language of the opening paragraph shows that the title is no mere catch-word. "God hath endued" gravely declare the Westminster divines, "the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined, to good or evil." After such a broad opening statement, it would seem that every subsequent word or phrase, on the subject, should be interpreted accordingly. And there is nothing which cannot be so interpreted as to leave room for this unim-

peachable human liberty—this very cornerstone of the whole sentiment of law and justice, human and divine, in the human breast; this inmost jewel of man's moral nature; this very possibility of conscience. To array Calvinism against this, is to expose it to dire and unmerited suspicion as hostile to good morals, as an occidental fatalism; the counterpart of Islamism in the East.

The Confession of Faith is no party to this unjust prejudice. It indeed proceeds to teach that, since the fall, "man hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good, being altogether averse from that which is good." And in this great mystery of the human will, we do and must freely admit it as the teaching of Scripture and reason that man, in some terribly true sense, is unable to do right, and that, without divine assistance he cannot be saved. Yet in no such sense as to overturn the clear teaching of the first paragraph of the section. This distinction liberal Presbyterians indicate by the use of the terms, "natural ability" and "moral inability." They hold that Section First teaches natural ability, and that the following paragraphs teach moral inability, the two attributes being consistent with each other, and their difference at once intelligible and of the highest importance.

We can quote good O. S. authority on the same side of the question. A committee of the Synod of Virginia, comprising, among others, such men as Drs. S. B. Wilson and W. S. Plumer, issued a paper in which was the following emphatic declaration: "The error of those who assert that the sinner has no power of any kind for the performance of duty, strips the sinner of his moral agency, and accountability and introduces the heresy of Antinomianism or Fatalism." President Edwards said: "The thing wanting—is not a being able, but a being willing. There are faculties of mind, and a capacity of nature, and everything else sufficient but disposition. Nothing is wanting but a will." The younger Edwards says: "It is inquired, concerning President Edwards' moral inability, whether the man who is the subject of it can remove it? I answer, yes."

Shall it then be considered latitudinarian for Mr. Barnes to say, as he did in his "Defence": "By this was meant, that [man] was wholly inclined to evil and opposed to good; and that this native propensity was so strong, as never to be overcome but by the influence of the Holy Spirit"? And shall it be said that this is one of the peculiarities of his theology, which should not be tolerated as on an equal footing, in the proposed reunited Church, with the theology taught at Princeton? Then we must be prepared to see in the New American Presbyterian Church a monster of intolerance, worthy of the middle ages and of the declining days of the Jewish Church, rather than one breathing the Evangelic sweetness, charity and mutual confidence of the Christian Church of the 19th century.

In a similar strain we might speak of the New School view of the extent of the Atonement. The attempt to fasten latitudinarianism upon us for holding and teaching the perfectly plain Scriptural doctrine that Christ gave his life a ransom for all, is a signal failure. Could it be shown to be contrary to the Confession, then it would only be so much the worse for the Confession. But it is not. The Confession may be chargeable with a sin of omission here, but it cannot be convicted of contravening the plain teaching of Scripture. The Confession is very careful to trace out the relation of Christ's work to the elect; but it is equally careful to leave room for a doctrine, like that of Dr. James Richards, that by the sacrifice of Christ a way was opened for the restoration of the whole human family to the favour of God, (*Tract 1: p 13*); a doctrine which Dr. Richards triumphantly vindicates as that of the mature commentator JOHN CALVIN, by abundant quotations from his exegetical works. A single citation will suffice to settle beyond dispute, what John Calvin saw was the mind of the Spirit on that point. He is commenting on Matt. 26: 28:—This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins. "Under the name of many" says Calvin "he designated not a part of the world only, but the whole human race. . . . While therefore we approach the sacred table, not only the general thought should come into the mind that the world is re-

deemed by Christ's blood, but that every one for himself, should reckon his own sins to be expiated." Another remarkable passage in the Commentaries, to which Dr. Richards does not allude, but which Dr. Cox in his interview with Dr. Chalmers invested with peculiar interest (Interviews, pp. 111, 112) is the comment on Rom. 5: 18. There the so-called New School doctrine of a general Atonement is taught as plainly, almost, as words can teach anything. "Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world," says John Calvin. "*Passus est Christus pro peccatis totius mundi*;" are the very words as they came from his pen, three hundred and twenty-seven years ago last October; while Charles Hodge, with his 19th century Calvinism, spends two pages of his voluminous Commentary on Romans in arguing that the "all men" of verse 18, means only the elect, and that John Calvin's interpretation teaches Universalism! (Comm. p. 270.) And Charles Hodge is "Old School," is a Calvinist *par excellence*, and we and John Calvin are New School, latitudinarian, in danger of Universalism and what not!

For our part, we are satisfied with our company. We vastly prefer John Calvin's latitudinarianism—John Calvin's Universalism, if you please—to all the modern improvements and patent safety-valves, that self-styled Old School men of our day declare essential to orthodoxy. Let it be understood, then, distinctly, that this doctrine of a general Atonement is one of the three leading doctrines of "New School" theology, and one of the peculiar doctrines of Mr. Barnes and Dr. Bemis which the *Presbyterian* and the *Banner* are unwilling to admit to equal rights in the Church, with that taught at Princeton.

TAXING EXEMPT PROPERTY.

Only within a few days, the mass of those interested have become aware of the extraordinary nature of the new measure to tax exempt property in this city now before the State Legislature. This bill, which has passed the House and is now before the Senate, originated, as might be expected, with one of the Representatives from our city. It proposes to tax real estate held by the University of Pennsylvania, by the chartered schools of religious societies, by schools for the deaf and dumb, schools for the blind, and by schools of divinity; as well as the real estate of churches, whose annual income is \$2500 or more. As the purpose is understood to be to subject these institutions to the city four per cent tax on the market value of their property, and as the provisions of the bill are understood to be not merely permissive but peremptory, it is evident that the measure is a serious blow at religion, education, and beneficence, at once. One cannot resist the conviction that a leading design of its originators was to embarrass the Christian institutions which have been the glory of our city, to the fullest extent in their power. The operation of the bill would be about equivalent to requiring the churches to support an additional pastor. The First Church and Calvary would each have to pay \$4000 a year; North Broad St. \$2500; Clinton St. \$1500, and so on; and Philadelphia would claim the peculiar distinction of being, perhaps, the only community in the world in which a University is subjected to taxation.

We fear that it is too late for us to sound the alarm, and that the measure has been adopted or defeated in the Senate by this time. Yet we much doubt whether Gov. Geary is the man to put his name to a bill of this astounding character. One thing is clear, the religious, and the intelligent, and the benevolent of our city have a new illustration of the utter unfitness of most of the men now in power for the places to which they were elected, especially from this city. "It is to be regretted" says the *Ledger*, "that our Representatives are not more familiar with the churches (!) and charitable and educational institutions." We are glad to see that one of our city dailies has at last waked up to the fact, that our city Representatives are drawn from a class of men not at all familiar with our churches. It might have inferred so much a month ago, from the fanatical zeal with which these men labored for the overthrow of the peace of our Philadelphia Sabbath. We rejoice that even so late, the journal of the largest circulation in our city has called attention to this fact in the character of our legislators, with re-

gret. Mild as the language is, we believe it sounds the doom of these men. The church-goers and church-supporters of this city, numbering from one-third to one-half of its adult population are waking up to the fact, that out of the 22 Senators and Representatives from this city at Harrisburg, the opponents of religion have twenty-one, the only exception being Mr. Wallace of Manayunk.

And if they do not know it, the respectable people of this vast city should know, that out of the twenty-two Senators and Representatives into whose hands they have suffered their interests to fall, ten names are either not to be found in the directory, or are there without any known occupation; three of them are recorded as clerks, of whom Mr. Gregory, the author of the bill under consideration, is put down as one; one is a tobacconist, one a real estate agent, while scarcely more than two or three are in circumstances at all qualifying them for the responsible positions they occupy. We are much mistaken if the case is not very much altered next year.

RENEWAL OF DR. ADAM'S RESIGNATION.

We deeply regret to announce that Dr. Adams has felt constrained to renew his resignation as pastor of North Broad street Church. Although he has recovered his voice, and preached last Sabbath with all his wanted fervor and ability, his general health is such as to forbid his early resumption of the full duties of the pastorate. Dr. Adams in his short career of seven or eight years among us, has been blessed of God as the instrument of establishing one of the most prosperous church enterprises in the city. We cannot persuade ourselves that his usefulness in this line of effort, is at an end, or that a preacher of such unusual abilities is about to be laid aside. The generous people of North Broad street have already refused one proposal of a like nature from their beloved pastor, when he was unable to speak above a whisper; what they will do now, we cannot say, but we fear Dr. Adams' views of his own health will be a decisive obstacle to any attempts to retain him. He sails for Europe next Wednesday, upon the invitation of Alexander Whilidin, Esq., to meet him at Rome, and remain abroad over six months.

SENATOR AUDLEY BROWNE.

We are glad to learn that this distinguished and earnest friend and supporter of every good cause in our Legislature, denies the correctness of the report of his speech on the Sunday Car Bill, sent to the Associated Press of this city, and upon which we remarked two weeks ago. We shall be happy to print a correct report of the Senator's speech on that occasion, as soon as it is published, or comes under our notice.

THE FUTURE OF THE O. S. CHURCH IN BALTIMORE.—Rev. J. Leighton Wilson D.D., writes to the *Southern Presbyterian*:—

The Presbyterians of Baltimore, as you are aware, are now divided into two parties, though still entertaining kindly and fraternal feelings towards each other. The first consists of such as have separated themselves from the Northern Church, and intend, at some early day, to connect themselves with ours, with which they are in full sympathy, both as to feeling and principle. The other still adheres to the Northern Church, but does not approve of many of their measures, especially of the acts of the Pittsburgh and St. Louis Assemblies, which they regard as harsh and unconstitutional, and of no binding force whatever. Dr. Bullock, Mr. Lefevre, and their churches, belong to the former party, whilst Drs. Backus, Smith, Dickson, and Mr. Hays, with their churches, belong to the latter. There are a number of wealthy and influential persons belonging to these last mentioned churches, who, while they are ecclesiastically connected with the Northern Church, have much more sympathy with the Southern, and devote their contributions mainly to carrying on our schemes of benevolence. What will be the ultimate status of such individuals, will depend, it is presumed, very much upon the spirit and action of the next Northern Assembly.

The *Presbyter* says this account, "we doubt not, is not far from correct."

CHURCHES.—The Church of Rockaway, N. J., have extended a call to the Rev. O. H. P. Deyo of the Presbytery of North River. The church edifice has been remodelled and much improved, and was re-dedicated on the 14th instant. King tendered his resignation as pastor of the First Church of Quincy, Ill., on the 17th of February.