

THE STANDARD

man says. It was not I that did it—I hate it—I resist it. And this is the struggle in every Christian's heart. The will is always free, but acts under motives. His character is not owing to the controlling power of the will; but his will itself is controlled by the state of the man, and by his fallen and yet renewed nature.

Lastly: the Confession takes this man to heaven. There it puts him out of the way of all temptation; no motive can ever turn him to a righteous life, and only good forever. And why? There is no temptation: no motive but such as is adapted to the state in which he is now placed. Over this man the devil has no power.

But for fallen angels, no such deliverance has been provided. They are fallen never to rise. No Redeemer has taken their nature upon him; no sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God can ever reach them; no motive can ever turn them to a righteous choice. They always make a wrong choice, and persevering in sin, will deserve punishment to all eternity.

So much for the Confession of Faith, and for the publick duty of the human mind upon this subject.

But we say, by putting in a paper which, though not my own, is my own, so well expresses my sentiments, that I will adopt it as my own. Speaking of "the distinction between natural and moral ability,"

Mr. Edwards says, "This is well—but President Edwards, I think, has put it all wrong. The will—P. 1. S. 4.

It seems to have adopted this distinction rather for the sake of convenience in opposing the "distinction of free will." We have thought, said the good man now here to witness the use now made of it, and the improvement made upon it, he would promptly disown his disciples. Mr. Edwards was a Calvinist of the strictest order, and never would he have predicated on a distinction which he adopted. It is true, far by no means defended as of essential importance, propositions like the following: "Men are as able to love God, make them new hearts, &c., as they are to walk, to go to church, to turn from one direction and go an opposite one; we take the liberty, however, to object to the distinction for several reasons which we deem important."

1. *It is an accurate use of language.* The word ability signifies a power sufficient to perform a thing or design. It is a relative term and is a relation to something to which it implies competency, as the cause does to the effect. To be competent, is to be adequate to a thing. Now we ask, is what is called "natural power" in this distinction, merely competent or adequate to a moral action? The case requires mere inspection, to convince of its absurdity. Can a cause which is merely natural produce a moral effect? Is it not disposition or inclination which gives moral character and accountability to an action? If not, we might predicate moral and accountable acts of beings irrational, or even inanimate. It is moral principle which affects the moral qualities of an action. Take this away, and the act is not moral. You take away all competency to the. The power contended for has really no more adequacy in the case, than if it had no existence. The soul, we admit, is susceptible of the exercises of love, desire, hatred, &c. Our rational and physical natures are capable of acting in accordance. But there is an essential competency prior to all these; the mainspring of the whole machinery—and this is the very power which the distinction itself supposes to be lacking. As well might we predicate power of the watch or clock to move forward and point out the hour of the day without the mainspring, or of the body to breathe without animal life, or of the wheel to move without the impulse of water, as to say that men can perform moral acts of any kind without the influence of corresponding moral principle. We cannot love God and obey him from such a principle, without a corresponding sense of his loveliness in our hearts. Such a state of heart is prior to all holy exercises, and as this has no existence previous to regeneration, we may as well say that a nonentity has power to act and to produce itself, as to say that men unrenewed have power to love God, make them new hearts, &c. The metaphysics of the Bible would tell us that the love of God, i. e. the nature of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is the mainspring to holy exercises—Power and yet no such competency to a thing is a glaring absurdity—a palpable contradiction.

2. This distinction, besides its incorrectness, is calculated to mislead. I shall here simply notice the effect likely to take place with the illiterate part of society. The plain man, who has been taught to consider, and very correctly too, the phrases "man's natural state, his state by nature," and such like, as denoting the whole state of man fallen, including all belonging to him, natural, moral, and physical powers, will conclude, if we say that men have natural power to love God, hate sin, and practise holiness, that absolute power or competency is intended; and it will require more than ordinary powers of metaphysics to convince him to the contrary. Suppose him to believe the proposition according to the received import of language, you will have a heretic, of course.—Nay more; you will have a heretic, a New Light who denies the efficacy of the divine Spirit in order to faith and love and holiness. Thus the distinction is calculated to create heresy, and has done it, had it time to produce the instances.

On the other hand, provided this plain man is a Calvinist, he will at once suppose all the foregoing heresies as resulting from the proposition by necessary consequence at least. Hence not only heresy, but anarchy and schism, as has already been the case, would result from the favorite distinction.

3. Besides being inaccurate and calculated to mislead, it gives nothing for those who adopt it, provided they do not know the heresies themselves, to which it most naturally leads. The intention of the distinction was originally to answer objections to the Calvinistic system of absolute grace; but it meets none, it creates at least one, for it is itself a most glaring absurdity. Supposing the man who adopts it to admit the total depravity of human nature, as the venerable President Edwards did—suppose him to admit that corrupt moral principle is the mainspring of human volitions and acts—that the Spirit's work in making us inwardly holy, is the sole mainspring to holy exercises—what has he gained? Just nothing at all, but an unwilling power—an incompetent, dead machine, possessing it is true all its parts except a spring of motion—a power—no power. But the distinction is intended to remove difficulties, to silence cavillers, who say they are excusable for not doing what they have not power to; and will the invention of an inefficient, incompetent power silence him? Will they be made at being told that they are a whole machinery adapted to motion, provided a proper efficiency be granted them? No; they will still cavil at the doctrines of grace, until simple truth without human

aid in attempting to cover its supposed deformities, prevails over their rebellious hearts. Provided the plan is successful in convincing them that their power is greater than it really is, it may cherish and strengthen their pride and prevent their seeking aid of him who alone is competent. But supposing the objector should probe your meaning and find that your power is incompetent, inadequate, inefficient, he would be likely to calculate you intended to deceive him. But his objections would remain.

4. We object to this distinction because it is a serious impediment to the successful preaching of the gospel. The success of gospel preaching consists in convincing sinners of their absolute impotency, and thus bringing them to depend on divine interference alone for salvation. For when does the sinner come to God for help? Not when he believes that he has natural power himself; but it is when, in his own estimation, he is as destitute of power to save himself as the Israelites were to part the Red Sea when pursued by the Egyptian hosts. It is when in the anguish of his heart, his soul fainting within him, he tries to divine aid as his last alternative. Now to bring sinners to this is the grand end of gospel preaching. A different kind of preaching may augment numbers, silence the cavils of carnal men, to whom plain truth is offensive; but it will not humble the natural heart, nor bring men really "to rest upon Christ alone for salvation as he is offered in the gospel." But if preaching is successful in convincing sinners of their absolute impotency, it is that which holds out to view the offence of the cross; humiliates the pride of the carnal, and claims all the glory of salvation, as due to the sacred Personality. The more it is calculated to convince of our want of strength, the better adapted to the end. The true gospel teaches men what they are in fact, and points them to the only power which is adequate to their case, and when successful in its great end, encourages those who in their own estimation have no might, to depend entirely on him whose love has almighty strength.

A conviction of absolute impotency, then, is as necessary to our coming to Christ as a conviction of mortal disease is necessary to induce us to make prompt application for medical aid. We use plainness of speech here, for we wish to be understood. We most unequivocally disown the gentleness of effects produced under that preaching which extols human power, and thus keeps back the offence of the cross. Satan himself would be willing how much we might fill our ranks, provided our preaching were not instrumental in bringing sinners to rest entirely on divine aid for salvation; for it is in this act that a sinner's league with rebellion and Satan is broken off. If genuine revivals of religion are brought about, it will be by the faithful, plain, convincing dealing, which leads the soul to cry out, "Lord save or I perish." There is much preaching which never brings Christ and Belial in collision, and which will always have its devoted number.

But we are no doubt asked again, how are the cavils of unconvinced men to be silenced? I answer, provided the power which, by this distinction, is created for the purpose, is an unavailing one, it cannot do it. Let them ever know that the power leaves them as absolutely incompetent to their own salvation as that they had no existence at all, and there is nothing gained. By art we may put matters a little out of sight, and persuade men that Christ and Belial agree better than they really do; but the cavils of sinners against the truth will never subside until their proud hearts are humbled and they reconciled to God. A crucified Saviour demands no apology on our part for any supposed deformity which he less in the estimation of the carnal mind. He seeks for no accommodation in the case. He is intent on entire victory, or none at all. To bring man to know and feel what he in reality is, is the object; truth; and when this end is gained through the instrumentality of preaching, Christ is triumphant over the haughtiness and lofty looks of man. Then the very opposition of nature which renders the sinner unable to come to Christ, is subdued, and he voluntarily surrenders himself into the hand of divine mercy. This is just what the doctrine of total inability is calculated to effect. Satan would rejoice to see it banished from our Theological vocabularies; but banish it he cannot. Let it be preached, should the war between Christ and Belial wax ten thousand times hotter. We will attempt no compromise—we have no apology to make for the naked truth.

For the greater part of my argument, on the *will*, and the reasons offered for rejecting the distinction between natural and moral ability, I am indebted to Rev. D. Moulton, of Franklin, Ia. (See *Views of Speculative Theology*,—Standard, 1832.) His theory is one which I embraced before I came into the ministry, and finding his manner of discussing the subject suited exactly to the present crisis, I took the liberty, by his permission, of using it. I am pleased to learn that he intends shortly to favor the Christian public with his views on this and several other subjects in a more extended form.

I am aware that we are accused of teaching the doctrine of *Physical regeneration*, but we teach *Spiritual regeneration*, not *Physical*. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit as our Lord taught us, an illustration taken from the *mysterious, impalpable, and irresistible* operations of the wind—so that we are *passive* in regeneration, as our Conf of Faith teaches, Chap. x. sec. 2.—The inner man is as passive under the Holy Spirit in regeneration, as the outer man is under the operations of the wind; as Lazarus, when quickened, came forth freely, the blind man saw voluntarily, and the regenerated sinner comes to Christ willingly in the day of God's power.

The facts stated in the Bible and transferred to our Conf of Faith, respecting the Natural man and the Spiritual man, and the theory advanced in my argument respecting the will, destroy the theory of Dr. Emmons, which makes God the author of sin, and the theory of Dr. Beecher, which finds nothing amiss in fallen man but a wrong bias of the will, and the doctrine of Mr. Finney, who teaches that man has ability to change his governing purpose, that is, to make himself a new heart. And this theory of the will, that is, of the man himself making wrong or right choices, sustains the doctrine of our Church, which teaches that "God has unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." Con. ch. iii. sec. 1.

By starting with the theory of Edwards, on the will, Dr. Emmons makes God the efficient cause of all our actions, bad and good, inconsistently denying at the same time that God is the author of sin; and Dr. Beecher gives us the full ability to do all that God requires of him; inconsistently denying that man can turn himself in *contra*-*ad* *dictum* according to their own views.—*Presbyterian*.

God expressly enjoins. The false philosophy and false metaphysics of the others corrupted their theology. The same is true of New England divinity.

The Westminster Divines understood philosophy and metaphysics better, and taught correctly. Yet these are the men, who, according to Dr. B., say the subject like half-gilded men, "as trots walking."

[We expect to conclude the "Trial of Dr. Beecher" next week, after which we will be enabled to give our readers a greater variety.]

CONGREGATIONALISM.—The opinion we have expressed on the sinister influence exerted on the Presbyterian Church by its connexion with Congregationalism, has called forth stern rebuke from various Congregational and semi-Presbyterian journals.

In the formation of our opinions we have been guided by the obvious facts in the case, and as we have consulted no man as to their soundness or the propriety of their publication, for them we must be considered as alone responsible. Thus far we have had no reason to question their truth or the unity of their publication. We have had no private spleen to gratify, and no personal ends to accomplish in the position we have taken; our sole object has been to preserve the integrity of a Church which we love, and whose doctrine and order we wish to defend against every sacrilegious innovation. We are disposed to forbear with Congregationalism while it retains its peculiar and distinctive character, but our respect for its honesty is lost, whenever we see it muddled up in the garb of Presbyterianism. A true Presbyterian we regard with appropriate respect, without regard to the church from which he may have come; and among our personal friends we are glad to acknowledge some such, who have been reared in the Congregational Churches of New England; but when the reception of Presbyterian terms of communion is regarded as a mere expedient which may answer the convenience of the recipients, the case is materially changed. We hold no truce with insincerity, and we should not be blamed if we declare against it wherever we detect it. Before we are condemned as sounding a needless alarm let the facts of the case be well weighed.

It is well known that a class of doctrines has prevailed to an alarming extent in the Presbyterian Church which is directly in conflict with her ancient faith. Now we ask where did these doctrines originate? They originated among the Congregational Churches of New England, and were introduced into the Presbyterian Church by those, whose change in ecclesiastical relations has been the mere result of a change of residence.

It is well known too, that new interpretation has been put on the Confession of Faith—that an attempt has been made to show that it teaches doctrines, which it was never before supposed to teach—that it has been avowedly subordinated to his present judgment, may add to or subtract from—that its obligation as a test of faith has been publicly denied—that it has been spoken of in terms of marked disrepute—and that deviations from its well ascertained and obvious sense, have been regarded with lenity if not positively justified.

Now to whom are these new and dangerous views to be traced? To Congregationalists, who have nominally become Presbyterians.

It is well known that a majority of the religious journals within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church, are made the vehicles of the long-continued sentiments, and that through their medium these loose views of Presbyterianism have been widely disseminated. Now we ask by whom are these journals edited? By Congregationalists we have become nominally Presbyterians.

The facts alone are amply sufficient to demonstrate the sad evils which have befallen our Church in consequence of its close connexion with Congregationalism; and unless remedied be found, these evils must necessarily be multiplied.

We have affirmed that by a gradual relaxation of principle, it has become common for Congregationalists, to enter the Presbyterian Church from mere convenience and without cordially adopting her standards; this has been branded as a slander; but the proof is abundant and we are able to refer to a recent circumstance in confirmation of our assertion.

The Editors of the Boston Recorder in unstudied phraseology, charged the Editor of the New York Evangelist with a dereliction of principle, in assuming the Presbyterian name while a Congregationalist at heart. This serious charge instead of being indignantly repelled, is virtually admitted by the Editor, who justifies himself on the ground, that he has done no more than other Congregationalists would do under similar circumstances. We will quote his language, that our readers may judge for themselves. Thus addressing the Editor of the Recorder he says,

"Can he name a Congregational minister who would refuse to accept a call to a Presbyterian congregation on the ground that his Congregational principles would not allow him to unite with the General Assembly?"

Does he know of a single minister from New England who has been called to live among Presbyterians, and has refused on account of conscientious scruples, to join the Presbytery where he lived?

"Is the Rev. Joseph Tracy a Congregationalist in principle?" Also, and he had become the editor of a paper in New York last year, as was contemplated, instead of Editor of the Boston Recorder, would he have judged it "inexpedient to join a Congregationalist for purposes of commerce" and that of Calcutta, for the sake of a larger salary?

If these queries mean any thing they certainly imply that Congregational ministers, still retaining their peculiar prejudices, would feel no difficulty in uniting with the Presbyterian Church, if their convenience or interest might be subserved by the transition.

In noticing these queries, the Boston Recorder gives us the following piece of history.

"In 1831, an article on Congregationalism written by Rev. Joshua Leavitt, was published in the Christian Spectator. Lately, that article has been revised by its author, to adapt it to existing circumstances, and published in the N. Y. Evangelist, without the author's name. In that article, the writer appears to be a Congregationalist on principle. It is preceded and followed by editorial remarks, in which the Rev. Joshua Leavitt says, in his own name, that if the General Assembly do sound so many will leave the Presbyterian church, and become Congregationalists, and indicates that he shall be one of them. Thus he says, he should regret; and therefore he hopes that the course of the Assembly will be such that he shall not be driven, by considerations of expediency, to act according to the principles of the article from the Spectator;—i. e. his own principles.

Perhaps, however, he regards the whole subject of church government as an affair of expediency only, and not of principle; for the article from the Spectator, so far as we have observed, does not in any way settle this question. If so, he may think the Congregational form more convenient than any other, and *in that sense*, "more congenial to the principle of the gospel," and yet join a Presbyterian.

The second, third and fourth questions may be answered in the affirmative. If we had gone to New York, we certainly should not have joined a Presbyterian, without some new light upon the subject. But we should not have thought it our duty to attempt to disturb Presbyterians, in the enjoyment of the same light of preaching according to their own views.—*Presbyterian*.

WESTERN FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

MISSION TO NORTHERN INDIA.

In the last number of the Chronicle appeared part of the Journal of the Rev. John C. Lowrie, in relation to things which occurred after his arrival at Lodiapur. An additional part is inserted in the present number. The Executive Committee have also received an account, in part, of the information which Mr. Lowrie obtained of "persons, places and things," &c., when on his journey from Calcutta to Lodiapur, bearing dates from July 25th, to August 21st, 1834. We have inserted Italics captions of the various items of intelligence recorded in both these journals, and commence the publication of that which is of prior date under the title of

TRAVEL TO LODIAPUR.

Diligently with the Boatmen.

CALCUTTA, July 25, 1834.—Having engaged a twelve-oared barge, and another native boat for the servants to cook on and for part of the luggage, I had expected to start early this morning on the journey to Lodiapur. Bishop Hober speaks of "two hours' squalling" with the boat people when he was setting out on his tour of visitation. I found some trouble both with the barge-people and the cook boat men. The former refused to cook on the boat, insisting on being permitted to cook on the barge—which, from the nature of the ingredients which they use, and from the smoke would have been very disagreeable. After they found that this point could not be gained, which however they did not yield until the matter was carried before the Agents from whom I had hired the boat, then the people of the other boat set up a great jabbering about the place in their boat which should be assigned to the barge-people for cooking. The obscure ground of the difficulty in both cases was the fear of losing *caste*, which was merely a pretext, the real cause of caste in this country are visible in a thousand forms. One of these is in reference to the place of their cooking their food. Each caste must cook by itself—car by itself. We have three places for cooking on the cook-boat; one for rice, at which all the servants cook, and one each for the crews of the two boats. One thing also was obvious in these disputes that *gilding* in our intercourse with these poor natives is quite important. I believe they entertain more respect for me now, than if I had yielded to all their demands. We started with the tide; but made no progress, as the wind was strongly against us, and were obliged to "come to," after two or three hours of hard work.

Description of Calcutta.

I purpose to give some notices of places, and shall begin with Calcutta. It is situated on the east bank of the Hooghly (Hougli) the most sacred outlet of the Ganges, about one hundred miles from the sea. The tide ascends many miles farther than to Calcutta, where the river in full tide is about a mile in width. This city has sprung up under the protection of the English, and it is now probably the most important in point of commerce, intelligence, and influence in all the eastern regions. The population is variously estimated at from 400,000 to 500,000; though the lower number does not include the immense river population, or people who dwell in boats of various sizes and descriptions. Of these some are permanently employed at the Ghatas (wharves), and landing-places; and great multitudes come from all parts of the interior and from the coasts, who are engaged in commerce, or rather in barter.

The city may be divided into two parts: in the southern part of which the Europeans dwell, usually in large houses with spacious verandas, situated in separate enclosures, or compounds, and so extensive and elegant in appearance as almost to justify the title which Calcutta frequently receives—the city of Palaces. Northward of this part of the city, stretching for several miles along the river, is the Native town, forming in every respect an entire contrast to the former: the streets, narrow, crooked, and dirty; the houses small, often mere huts, crowded together, and teeming with inhabitants.

There are several densely populated villages in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta; as Mirzapur (Mirzapore), Chittpur of the Hugli; so that if the population of the suburbs were added to that of Calcutta, the largest that has been mentioned would not probably be too great.

Diversity of Character.

The city presents a great diversity of character amongst its inhabitants. The Europeans, who do not amount to more than 4000 or 5000, are chiefly descendants from Portuguese—a class which has greatly improved in character, and risen in public estimation within a few years. The mass of the population, however, is made up of Bengalees (Bengaloes) and other Hindus who, in religion are divided into two classes: the Moslems, or followers of Mohammed; and the Hindus, or worshippers of various Hindu idols. In addition to the classes of inhabitants which have been mentioned, there are many Armenians and Jews, and some Chinese; besides Malays, Burmese, Arabs, &c. &c. The latter attached to Calcutta chiefly for purposes of commerce; and though they always come to the scutcheons in general, which is a residence in a Christian land, would almost certainly be opponents of *christianity*.

I do not mean to say, that *most* of the *christianities* of this class are not equal or superior to some *christians* in mass-souls; but only that the former would be much benefited by improving the *christianity* of the latter. One of the *christian* Societies is an East-India one, which has an extensive influence for some time in England; and he is now engaged in one of the <i