

doctrine that men are involved in the guilt of Adam's first sin,—that that sin was imputed to his posterity,—is the highest point of ultra-Calvinism,—a doctrine which the more moderate and reasonable Calvinists—including, it is often alleged, Calvin himself—rejected; and that it is the darkest and most mysterious view that has ever been presented of men's moral condition by nature; while yet the fact is certain, that, at the time of the Reformation, this doctrine was held by many Romanists,—by some of the theologians of the Council of Trent, who were not Calvinists,—and that it was applied by them for the purpose of softening and mitigating, or rather of explaining away, the sinfulness of men's natural condition.

It is true that there have been Calvinistic theologians who, admitting the entire corruption of the moral nature which men bring with them into the world, and the universality of actual transgression of God's law as certainly resulting from it, have not admitted the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity; and this fact has contributed to strengthen the impression which I have described. They have, however, taken up this position just because they have not discovered what they count sufficient evidence of this imputation in Scripture. Now, it is conceded that there is a greater variety and amount of positive evidence, not only from Scripture, but also from other sources, for the actual moral depravity of men's nature, and for the universality of actual sins in their conduct, than for the imputation of Adam's first sin to his posterity. It is also conceded that the admission of the existence and universal prevalence of a corrupt moral nature,—and, as a certain consequence of this, of actual transgressions,—in all men, is of greater practical importance, in its natural and legitimate bearing upon men's general views and impressions with respect to the scheme of salvation and their own immediate personal duty, than a belief of the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin. But it seems plain enough that the doctrine of the actual moral depravity of men's nature,—certainly and invariably producing in all of them actual transgressions which subject them to God's wrath and curse,—as describing an actual feature of their natural condition, is really, when taken by itself, and unconnected with the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, in some respects more mysterious and incomprehensible than when the doctrine of imputation is received to furnish some explanation

and account of it. The final appeal, of course, must be made to Scripture: the question must be decided by ascertaining whether or not the word of God teaches the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his posterity; and on this we are not called upon here to enlarge. But there is certainly nothing more awful, or mysterious, or incomprehensible, in the one doctrine than in the other; and there is no ground whatever why the rejection of the doctrine of the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity, as distinguished from that of their universal moral depravity as an actual feature in their condition, should be held to indicate, as many seem to suppose it does, moderation and caution, or an aversion to presumptuous and dangerous speculations.\*

The Council of Trent, though not giving any very explicit deliverance upon this subject, has at least left it free to Romanists to profess and maintain, if they choose, the views in regard to the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his posterity which have been usually held by Calvinistic divines; and those Romish theologians who have made the nearest approach to sound Protestant doctrine upon other points, have uniformly spoken very much like Calvinists upon this point. Even Cardinal Bellarmine, though he showed no leaning to the comparatively sound theology taught in his own time by Baius, and more fully in the seventeenth century by Jansenius, has laid down positions upon this department of the sinfulness of the state into which man fell, which contain the whole substance of what the strictest Calvinists usually contend for. He expressly asserts that the first sin of Adam, “*omnibus imputatur, qui ex Adamo nascuntur, quoniam omnes in lumbis Adami existentes in eo, et per eum peccavimus, cum ipse peccavit;*” and again, “*in omnibus nobis, cum primum homines esse incipimus, præter imputationem inobedientiæ Adami, esse etiam similem perversionem, et obliquitatem unicuique inhærentem.*” Upon the assumption of taking *peccatum* to mean an actual transgression of God's law, he would define the original sin of mankind to be “*prima Adami inobediencia, ab ipso Adamo commissa, non ut erat singularis persona, sed ut personam totius generis humani gerebat;*” and, lastly, he makes the following very important statement, most fully confirming one of the leading positions which we have endeavoured to illustrate:—“*Nisi*

\* See “The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation,” p. 377.—EDRS.

enim ponamus, nos in Adamo, et cum Adamo verè peccasse, nulla ratione explicari poterit, quomodo in parvulis recens natis sit aliqua vera culpa : et hoc Catholicum dogma non tam supra rationem, quam contra rationem esse videbitur. Nam quidquid dicamus in parvulis ex peccato Adami hærerere, sive reatum, sive aversionem, sive gratiæ privationem, sive quid aliud ; illud nullo modo parvulis vitio dari, ac ne esse quidem poterit, nisi processerit ab actione liberâ, cujus actionis illi aliquo modo participes fuerint." And, after reasoning at some length in support of this position, he concludes,—“Maneat igitur quod supra diximus, non posse in parvulis aliquid esse, quod habeat culpæ rationem, nisi participes fuerint etiam ipsi prævaricationis Adæ.”\*

We propose now to notice the discussions which have subsequently taken place among Protestants as to the right mode of explaining the bearing of Adam's first sin upon the character and condition of his posterity ; and from this we hope it will appear that those who have denied the doctrine of imputation in words, have either been obliged to admit it in substance, or else have fallen into greater difficulties in the exposition of their views than those which they were labouring to avoid.

That Adam's first sin exerted some influence upon the condition of his posterity, and that this influence was of an injurious or deteriorating kind, is so plainly taught in the Bible, that it has been admitted by all who have professed to believe in the divine authority of the sacred Scriptures, except Socinians and Rationalists, whose denial of original sin in any sense, combined with their denial of the divinity and atonement of Christ, warrants us in asserting that, whatever they may sometimes profess or allege, they do not truly and honestly take the word of God for their guide. Modern Rationalists indeed, to do them justice, admit frankly enough that the doctrine of original sin, including even the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, was plainly taught by the Apostle Paul ; while they do not regard *this* as affording any sufficient reason why *they* should believe it. Wegscheider

\* De Amissione Gratiæ et Statu Peccati, Lib. v., c. xvii. et xviii. ; Opera, tom. iv. Garissole adduced the authority of Bellarmine against Placæus' denial of immediate and antecedent imputation. See Placæus, De Imputatione primi peccati Adami,

P. i., c. x., p. 125 ; and Pars ii., c. xiv.

On these statements of Bellarmine, see Parei Bellarmini de Amiss. Grat. et Statu Pecc. Libri sex explicati et castigati, pp. 859-69.

admits that it is impossible, in accordance with the principles of philology and exegesis, to deny that Paul taught this doctrine ; while yet he does not scruple to say, “Imputatio illa peccati Adamitici, quam Paulus Apostolus, sui temporis doctores Judæos secutus, argumentationibus suis subjecit, ad obsoleta dogmata releganda est, quæ et philosophiæ et historiæ ignorantia in magnum veræ pietatis detrimentum per ecclesiam propagavit et aluit.”\*

Among those, however, who have made a somewhat more *credible* profession of receiving the sacred Scriptures as a rule of faith,—and who, in consequence, have admitted the general position, that the fall of Adam exerted some injurious influence upon the condition of his posterity,—there has been a great diversity of opinion, both as to what the effects were which resulted from that event, and as to the nature of the connection subsisting between it and the effects which in some way or other flowed from it. Some have held that the only effect entailed by Adam's sin upon his posterity was temporal death, with the bodily infirmities and sufferings which lead to it, and the sorrows and afflictions which its universal prevalence implies or produces. Others have held that, in addition to this ; it introduced, and in some way transmitted, a deteriorated moral nature, or otherwise placed men in more unfavourable circumstances ; so that their discharge of the duties which God requires of them is more difficult than in Adam's case, and is marked to a greater extent, and more frequently, if not universally, by failure or shortcoming, than it would have been had Adam not fallen. And under this general head there is room for many gradations of sentiment as to the extent of the deterioration, the strength and prevalence of the tendencies and influences that lead men to commit sin, and involve them in the actual commission of it,—gradations approaching indefinitely near, either to the first view already explained, or to the third now about to be stated. A third class, believing in the entire corruption of the moral nature which all men bring with them into the world, and in the universality of actual transgressions of God's law, regard all this, upon the testimony of Scripture, as in some way or other caused or occasioned by Adam's sin. It is obvious enough that those who advocate the first two of these views,—com-

\* Institutiones Theologiæ Christianæ Dogmaticæ, P. iii., c. i., pp. 370 and 386, edit. sexta. 1829.

prehending almost all who are commonly classed under the name of Arminians,—have just ascribed to the fall of Adam as much as they thought it could fairly and justly bear; and that,—as they felt constrained by the testimony of Scripture to regard as in some way or other connected with Adam's sin, whatever of sin and suffering actually existed among men,—they have been somewhat influenced in their views as to the actual facts or phenomena of men's condition, by certain notions as to the possibility of admitting Adam's sin as in some way explaining or accounting for them. This mode of contemplating the subject, however, is unreasonable, and is fitted to lead into error. The right mode of dealing with it is just to investigate, fully and unshrinkingly, the actual facts and phenomena of the case; to find out thoroughly and accurately, by a fair and fearless application of all competent means of information, what the moral character and condition of men are; and then to consider what can be ascertained as to the cause or origin of this state of things. There would not, we think, have been so many who would have denied that man's moral nature is at all corrupted, had it not been for the perverting influence of the impression that, consistently with justice, Adam *could* not have transmitted to his posterity any evils but such as were of a merely temporal character; and more would probably have yielded to the strength of the evidence from Scripture and observation in support of the entire depravity of men's moral nature, and the certainty and universality of actual transgressions, had it not been for the fancied difficulty of connecting in any way this state of things, if admitted, with the first sin of the first man.

We are not, however, at present considering the general subject of the actual moral character and condition of men by nature, but only the guilt of Adam's first sin, and the nature of the connection subsisting between that event and the effects which in some way flowed from it. And in doing so, we will assume for the present the truth of the third and last of the views we have stated,—that, viz., which, upon most abundant grounds, furnished both by Scripture and experience, represents the moral nature of men as wholly depraved, and as certainly leading, in every instance of a human being who attains to the age and condition of moral responsibility, to actual transgressions of God's law. We assume this at present, not merely because we think it can be con-

clusively proved to be the truth,—the actual state of the case,—a real phenomenon which exists,—which should be explained and accounted for, if possible, but which must be admitted, whether it can be accounted for or not; but also because it is only upon the assumption that this is the actual state of the case, that the difficulty of accounting for it becomes serious and formidable, and because our chief object at present is merely to show that those who, *admitting all this to be a reality*,—as all Calvinistic divines, and some of the more evangelical Arminians, have done,—yet deny the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity, do not thereby escape from any real difficulty, and only introduce greater darkness and mystery into the whole matter.

So long as men are regarded as being by nature exposed merely to temporal evils, or as being placed only in unfavourable moral circumstances,—which yet by their own strength, or by some universal grace, either actually furnished or at least made accessible to all men, they can overcome or escape from,—there is no great difficulty in explaining the whole matter by the undoubted right of God, as Creator and Governor of the world, who, *all* must admit, may give to His creatures different degrees of happiness and of privilege as He chooses, provided He does not make their existence upon the whole miserable, a curse and not a blessing, without their having furnished a ground for this by their own demerit. It is otherwise, however, if the case be as Calvinists maintain it is,—viz., that the moral character which all men bring with them into the world is such as certainly and necessarily to lead them into actual transgressions, which, unless divine grace specially interpose, subject them to God's wrath and curse, not only in the life that now is, but also in that which is to come. Here difficulties present themselves which we cannot but feel are not fully solved or explained by God's mere right, as Creator and Governor, to bestow different degrees of happiness and privilege upon His creatures. If the fact, indeed, as to the actual moral character and condition of men be once fully established, we may need to resolve it, for want of any further explanation, into the divine sovereignty; and even if we could in some measure explain it,—*i.e.*, in the way of pushing the difficulty one or two steps further back, for that is really all that *can* be done on any theory,—we *must* resolve the matter into the divine sovereignty at last. Still, upon the Calvinistic view of the actual phenomena, the real state of the human

race by nature, we cannot but feel that the mere right of God, as Creator, to bestow upon His creatures different degrees of happiness and privilege, does not afford any real solution or explanation of the difficulty; and we are in consequence warranted to inquire if there be any other way of solving it, or of making any approach towards a solution of it.

There have, indeed, been a few Calvinistic divines, more remarkable for their boldness and ingenuity than for the soundness of their judgment,—and among others Dr Twisse, the prolocutor or president of the Westminster Assembly,—who have held that, even upon the Calvinistic view of the facts of the case and their certain results, the matter could be positively explained and vindicated by the principle of God's right to bestow different degrees of happiness and privilege upon His creatures, and have even ventured to take up the extraordinary ground,—*the only one, indeed, on which their position can be maintained*,—viz., that an eternal existence even in misery is a better and more desirable condition than non-existence or annihilation, and is thus, upon the whole, a blessing to the creature, and not a curse; and that, consequently, God may bestow it or effect it as a result of sovereignty, without its being necessary that there should be any previous ground in justice to warrant this. But this notion is so diametrically opposed at once to the common sense and the ordinary feelings of men,—and, what is of far more importance, to the explicit and most solemn and impressive declaration of our Saviour, “Good were it for that man that he had never been born,”—that it has not been generally adopted by Calvinistic divines, and has only served the purpose of furnishing a handle to enemies.

Those, then, who hold the Calvinistic view of the state of the case with respect to the moral character and condition of men, may not unreasonably be asked whether they can give any other account of the origin, or any explanation of the cause, of this fearful state of things. Now, in the history of the discussions which have taken place upon this subject, we can trace *four* pretty distinct courses which have been taken by theologians who all admitted the total native depravity of mankind: First, some have refused to attempt any explanation of the state of the case, beyond the general statement that Scripture represents it as in some way or other connected with, and resulting from, the fall of Adam, and have denied, expressly or by plain implica-

tion, the common Calvinistic doctrine of imputation. A second class, comprehending the great body of Calvinistic divines, have regarded it as, in some measure and to some extent, explained by the principle of its being a *penal infliction* upon men, resulting from the imputation to them of the guilt of Adam's first sin. A third class, while refusing to admit in words the doctrine of imputation, as commonly stated by orthodox divines, have yet put forth such views of the connection between Adam and his posterity, and of the bearing of his first sin upon them, as embody the sum and substance of all, or almost all, that the avowed defenders of the doctrine of imputation intend by it. And, lastly, there is a fourth class, who, while professing in words to hold the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin, yet practically and substantially neutralize it or explain it away, especially by means of a distinction they have devised between immediate or antecedent, and mediate or consequent imputation,—denying the former, which is the only true and proper imputation, and admitting only the latter.

It is quite plain that it is only the first two of these four divisions of theological opinion that can be regarded as important, or even real and substantial. For, on the one hand, those who belong to the third class, though showing an unnecessary fastidiousness as to some portion of the general orthodox phraseology upon this point, and an unnecessary disposition to find fault with some of the details of the doctrine, and with some of the particular aspects in which it has been represented and explained, and thereby lending their aid to injure the interests of sound doctrine, may yet be really ranked under the second class, because they admit the whole substance of what the doctrine of imputation is usually understood to include or involve; while, on the other hand, those who belong to the fourth class, admitting imputation in words, but denying it in reality and substance, belong properly to the first class. Still it is true that these four distinct classes can be plainly enough traced in a survey of the history of the discussions which have taken place upon this subject. It is scarcely necessary to say, that all these various parties profess, while maintaining their different opinions, to be just giving forth the substance of what they respectively believe that Scripture teaches or indicates upon the subject, and that the points in dispute between them can be legitimately and conclusively decided only by a

careful investigation of the true meaning of its statements. We are not called upon here to enter upon this investigation, and can only make a few general observations upon the leading positions.

It is conceded to the supporters of the first view, that the leading position they are accustomed to maintain,—viz., that the facts or phenomena of the case, the universal moral depravity and actual personal guilt or sinfulness of men, being once conclusively established by satisfactory evidence, they are not bound, as a preliminary to, or an accompaniment of, receiving the facts or phenomena as proved, and calling upon others to receive them, to give any account or explanation of the origin or cause of this state of things,—that this position is altogether impregnable, and cannot be successfully assailed. They are entitled to resolve it into the divine sovereignty, without attempting to explain it, and to contend that since this state of things does exist, it *must* be consistent with the character and moral government of God, though we may not be able to unfold this consistency. The supporters of the doctrine of imputation take advantage of this principle, as well as those who differ with them on this point. No man pretends to be able to comprehend or explain the doctrine of the fall of Adam, and its bearing upon the present character and condition of men. All admit that it involves mysteries which human reason, enlightened by divine revelation, cannot fathom; and that, after all our study of Scripture, and all our investigation of the subject, we must resolve the matter into the divine sovereignty, and be content to say, “Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight.” All that is contended for by the advocates of the doctrine of imputation is, in general, that Scripture suggests and sanctions certain ideas upon the subject, which commend themselves to our minds as tending somewhat to explain and illustrate this mystery; to interpose one or two steps between the naked facts of the case, and the unfathomable abyss of God’s sovereignty; and thereby to bring this subject somewhat into the line of the analogy of things which we can in some measure understand and estimate.

The supporters of the first view are right, so far as they go, in saying that Scripture makes known to us that the first sin of Adam was, in some way or other, connected with the moral character and condition of his posterity,—that the one was in some

way the cause or occasion of the other. But they are wrong in holding that Scripture teaches nothing more upon the subject than this, and, more particularly, in holding that it gives no sanction to the doctrine of imputation, as commonly held by Calvinistic divines. We cannot admit that this vague and indefinite statement of theirs, though undoubtedly true so far as it goes, fills up or exhausts the full import of the apostle’s declarations,—that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin,—that by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation,—that by one man’s disobedience many were made, or constituted, (*κατεστάθησαν*) sinners;\* and of other information given us in Scripture upon this point. But we are not called upon to dwell upon this topic; and we proceed to observe that the views which we regard as suggested and sanctioned by Scripture,—i.e., the ideas which go to constitute and to explain the doctrine of the imputation of the guilt of Adam’s first sin to his posterity,—do tend somewhat to illustrate this mysterious subject, and, at least, do not introduce into it any additional difficulty.

In order to the first sin of Adam exerting any real influence upon the moral character and condition of his posterity, he and they must have been in some sense or respect *one*; i.e., some species of unity or identity must have subsisted between them, as the ground, or basis, or rationale of the influence exerted, of the effect produced. This is admitted by all; and the question, indeed, may be said to turn mainly upon the nature and foundation of this oneness or identity. Some have supposed that there was a sort of physical oneness or identity between Adam and his descendants, whereby they existed in him as the plant in the seed, or the branches in the root, and thus, existing in him in a sort of literal physical sense, sinned in him and fell with him,—his sin and fall being thus theirs, and of course justly imputed to them, and involving them in its penal results. Augustine seems to have held the idea of a literal personal oneness; and not a few Calvinistic writers have used language that seemed to imply some notion of this sort. Jonathan Edwards certainly gave some countenance to this notion, though he seems to have combined, if not identified, it with the next mentioned species of identity,—that based upon Adam being the progenitor of the human race, and

\* Rom. v. 12, 18, 19.



producing beings like himself.\* This idea has no sanction from Scripture, and is indeed quite unintelligible as a supposed description of an actual reality. Adam was undoubtedly the actual progenitor of the whole human race, and this certainly constitutes, in a certain sense, a oneness or identity between them. It seems to be a law of nature, that where there is a process of generation, a being should produce one like himself,—of the same nature and general qualities with himself. This natural oneness or identity, viewed in connection with this law, has been applied to explain the bearing of Adam's sin upon his posterity. And the explanation just amounts to this,—that Adam having, by his first sin, become, in the way of natural consequence, or penal infliction, or both, wholly depraved in his own moral nature, transmitted, in accordance with the law above described, the same moral nature, —*i.e.*, one wholly depraved,—to all his descendants. This view is generally adopted by those who deny the doctrine of imputation; but they scarcely venture to put it forth as throwing any real light upon the difficulty, or even changing its position; for, as the laws of nature are just the arrangements or appointments of God,—the modes or channels through which He effects His own purposes,—to put forth this as the explanation of the bearing of Adam's first sin upon the moral character and condition of his posterity, is merely to say, that God established a constitution or system of things, by which it was provided that the moral character which Adam might come to possess should descend to all his posterity; and that as he came, by his first sin, to have a depraved nature, this accordingly descended to all of them. Now, this is really nothing more than stating the matter of fact, *as a matter of fact*, and then tracing the result directly and immediately to a constitution or appointment of God. In short, it just leaves the matter where it found it,—it interposes nothing whatever between the result and the divine sovereignty, and does nothing whatever towards explaining or vindicating that divine constitution or arrangement under which the result has taken place. At the same time, it is to be remembered that the fact that Adam was the natural progenitor of the whole human race is universally

\* *Vide* Princeton Essays, pp. 139, | Payne on Original Sin, Lect. ii., pp.  
151. Edwards on Original Sin, P. | 86-93.  
iv., c. iii. Stapfer, tom. i., p. 236. |

admitted; that it is in no way inconsistent with the doctrine of imputation; and that if any advantage is derivable from the application of the law, that "like begets like," it is possessed as fully by those who believe as by those who deny this doctrine, while those who deny it have no other principle to adduce in explanation.

The peculiarity of the doctrine of imputation, as generally held by Calvinistic divines, is, that it brings in *another* species of oneness or identity as subsisting between Adam and his posterity, viz., that of federal representation or covenant headship,—*i.e.*, the doctrine that God made a covenant with Adam, and that in this covenant *he* represented his posterity, the covenant being made not only for himself, but for them, including in its provisions them as well as himself; so that, while there was no *actual* participation by them in the moral culpability or blameworthiness of his sin, they became, in consequence of his failure to fulfil the covenant engagement, *rei*, or incurred *reatus*, or guilt in the sense of legal answerableness, to this effect, that God, on the ground of the covenant, regarded and treated them as if they had themselves been guilty of the sin whereby the covenant was broken; and that in this way they became involved in all the natural and penal consequences which Adam brought *upon himself* by his first sin. Now, this principle, viewing it merely as a hypothesis, and independently of the actual support it receives from Scripture, not only does not introduce any additional difficulty into the question, but does tend to throw some light upon this mysterious transaction, by bringing it somewhat under the analogy of transactions which we can comprehend and estimate, though it is not disputed that it still leaves difficulties unsolved which we cannot fully fathom.\* If this were seen in its true light, and if thereby the special prejudice with which many regard this doctrine of the imputation of the guilt or *reatus* of Adam's first sin to his posterity were removed, it might be expected that all who admit the total depravity of human nature as an actual feature of men's natural condition, of which they can give no account or explanation whatever, would be more likely to yield to the weight of the positive evidence which Scripture furnishes in proof of the doctrine that all mankind sinned in Adam, and fell with him in his first transgression.

\* "The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation," pp. 391, etc.—EDRS.

Sec. III.—*The Want of Original Righteousness.*

The second ingredient or constituent element of the sinfulness of the estate into which man fell, and in which all men now are by nature, is the want of original righteousness; and the explanation of this, too, is connected with some controversial discussions which prevailed at the time of the Reformation, and with some topics which have been since controverted between Romanists and Protestants. The statement in the Catechism, in which the want of original righteousness is represented as one of the features or elements of the estate of sinfulness into which man fell, contains, by plain implication, an assertion of these positions,—that man, before his fall, had righteousness, or justice (*justitia*, as it was commonly called), entire rectitude as an actual quality of his moral nature or constitution; that no man now, since the fall, has naturally this original righteousness; and that it is a sin in men, one of the real features of the sinfulness of the estate into which they fell, that they have it not. This original righteousness which man had before the fall, is usually taken as designating not merely innocence or freedom from everything actually sinful, and from all bias or tendency towards it, but something higher and nobler than this,—viz., the positive, entire conformity of his whole moral nature and constitution—not merely of his actions, but of the innermost sources of these actions, in his desires and motives, in all the tendencies and inclinations of his mind and heart—to all the requirements of the law, which is holy, and just, and good. Original righteousness, thus understood, Protestants have usually regarded as comprehended in the image of God, in which man was created; and they have generally considered the fact that he was created in God's image, as affording evidence that he was created with original righteousness.

We have not, indeed, in Scripture any very direct information as to what the image of God in which man was created consisted in; and hence some variety of opinion has been entertained upon this point. Some have held that the image of God consisted in the mental powers and capacities which constituted man a rational and responsible being; the Socinians, who usually contrive to find in the lowest deep a lower deep, view it as consisting only in dominion over the other creatures; while most men have been of opinion that it must have included, whatever else it might imply,

entire conformity of moral nature and constitution, according to his capacity, to God's character and laws. We can scarcely, indeed, conceive it possible that God would have directly and immediately created any other kind of rational and responsible being than one morally pure and perfect, according to his capacity or standing in creation; and we would have required very strong evidence to lead us to entertain any doubt of this, even though we had not been told that God created man after His own image. And we are plainly told in Scripture that the image of God, into which man is to be renewed,—according to which he is to be made over again, as the result in God's chosen people of the mediation of Christ, and the operation of His Spirit,—consists in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; from which the inference is fully warranted, that in these qualities consisted, principally at least, the image of God in which he was created.

Romanists do not dispute that Adam, before the fall, had original righteousness as an actual quality of his moral character, or that, by his sin, he lost it, not only for himself, but for his posterity,—and that all men now come into the world without it; and, indeed, a large proportion of the most eminent Romish divines maintain that this want of original righteousness—*caerentia* or *privatio originalis justitiæ*—is the principal, if not the sole, ingredient of the sinfulness of men's natural condition; and that the decree of the Council of Trent leaves them at full liberty to assert this. It is Socinians only who deny that man ever had an original righteousness. As their fundamental principle upon this whole subject is, that men have now the very same moral nature or constitution as Adam had when he was created; and as they do not ascribe to men as they now come into the world what is usually understood by original righteousness as a positive quality, but merely innocence of nature, or freedom from all moral depravity, combined with full power to do whatever God requires of them, they of course deny that Adam ever possessed it. But while the Church of Rome admits that Adam, before his fall, had original righteousness as a positive quality of his moral character, she maintains that this original righteousness was not natural to him, but supernatural,—i.e., that it was not comprehended in, or did not result from, the principles of his moral nature, as originally constituted, but was a supernatural gift or grace, specially or extraordinarily conferred upon him by God; and, in order to bring

out more emphatically the distinction between the *pura naturalia*, as they call them, in Adam, and this supernatural gift of original righteousness, many Popish writers have contended that this supernatural gift was not conferred upon him along with the *pura naturalia* at the time of his creation, but at a subsequent period. And it is certain that the Council of Trent intentionally and deliberately framed its decree upon the subject in such terms as not to preclude the posteriority in point of time of the bestowal of the *supernaturalia* upon Adam, for the original draft of the decree set forth that Adam by his sin lost the holiness and justice in which he was created,—*sanitatem et justitiam in qua creatus fuerat*,—and when it was represented to them that this would be a condemnation of those divines who had maintained that Adam did not possess this *justitia* or righteousness at his creation, but received it afterwards, they, in order to avoid this, changed the expression into *in qua constitutus fuerat*, as it now stands in the decree.\* Although the Reformers generally, and especially Luther, had strenuously contended that this original righteousness was a quality of man's proper nature, and necessary to its perfection and completeness, and not a supernatural gift, specially and, as it were, adventitiously and in mere sovereignty conferred by God, yet nothing was formally decided upon this point by the Council of Trent. The opposite view, however, was universally held by Popish theologians; and it was at length made a binding article of faith by the bulls of Pius V. and Gregory XIII. against Baius in 1567 and 1579, confirmed by a bull of Urban VIII. in 1641.† In these bulls, which, though opposed by some at the time of their promulgation, have been accepted by the Church, and are therefore binding upon all Romanists, the following doctrines taught by Baius were condemned as heretical, and, of course, the opposite doctrines were asserted and established:—“*Humanæ naturæ sublimatio, et exaltatio in consortium divinæ debita fuit integritati primæ conditionis, ac proinde naturalis dicenda est, non supernaturalis. Integritas primæ conditionis non fuit indebita naturæ humanæ exaltatio, sed ejus naturalis conditio.*” And, in the bull *Unigenitus*, the following doctrine of Quesnel was con-

\* Moehler's Symbolism, B. i., P. i., sec. i., p. 40. | tatus de Gratia, c. vi., tom. v., pp. 264-272.

† Bailly's "Theologia Moralis" Trac-

demned:—"Gratia Adami est sequela creationis et erat debita naturæ sanæ et integræ."\*

This question, accordingly, has always been regarded as one of the points controverted between Protestants and Papists. It may seem at first view a mere logomachy, and to involve considerations which are of no practical importance, or points which we have no materials for deciding. This, however, is a mistake, as might be shown at once from an examination of the nature of the case, and from the history of the discussions which have taken place regarding it. It is quite true that there are senses the words might bear in which the Protestants would admit that this original righteousness was not natural, but supernatural, and in which Papists would admit that it was not supernatural, but natural, as you will see explained in Turretine; † yet it is also true, as you will likewise see there, that there is a pretty well defined *status quaestionis* upon the subject. The question may, without entering into minute details, be said to be this: Whether this original righteousness, which Adam admittedly possessed, formed an integral necessary constituent of man's original moral constitution, so that his general position and capacities as a moral being would have been materially different from what they were if he had wanted it, and would not have possessed that completeness and perfection which are due and necessary to the place which God, in His general idea or archetype of man, intended him to occupy,—the purpose which He created man to serve; and we think there are sufficient indications in Scripture to warrant us in deciding this question against the Church of Rome in the affirmative.

The chief object of the Romanists in maintaining that this righteousness was not an original inherent quality of man's proper nature, due to it (*debita*), because necessary to its completeness or perfection, is, that they may thus lay a foundation for ascribing even to fallen man a natural power to do God's will, and that they may with greater plausibility deny that concupiscence in the regenerate is sin. The bearing of this notion upon their denial of the sinfulness of concupiscence,—the only doctrine taught by the Council of Trent, in their decree upon original sin, which Protes-

\* Perrone, Prælectiones Theologicæ; | Vide also Bellarmin. De Gratia Primi Tractatus de Deo Creatore, P. iii., c. ii., tom. i., col. 740. | Hominis, c. v., op. tom. iv.; and Amesii Bellarmin. Enervat., Le Blanc, and Perrone.

† Turretin. Loc. v., Quaest. xi.



tants in general condemn as positively erroneous,—we will afterwards have occasion to advert to; and the mode in which they apply the notion to show that man has still, though fallen, full power to do the will of God, is this: As Adam's original righteousness, or the perfect conformity of his entire moral constitution to God's law, did not form a constituent part of his proper nature as a creature of a certain class or description, but was a superadded supernatural gift, he might lose it, or it might be taken from him, while yet he retained all his proper natural powers, including a power to do the will of God, though now without righteousness, as a positive quality of his moral character. And this, indeed, is the view which they commonly give of the nature and effects of the fall. They commonly assert that Adam, by his sin, lost all that was supernaturally bestowed upon him, but retained everything that formed an original part of his own proper moral constitution; though this likewise, they generally admit, was somewhat injured or damaged by his transgression; and this, too, they contend, is still the actual condition of fallen man. He is stained, indeed, they admit, with the guilt of Adam's sin, and he wants original righteousness, which Adam forfeited for himself and for his posterity; but there is no positive corruption or depravity attaching to his moral nature; and having the natural moral powers with which Adam was originally endowed, though without his superadded supernatural graces, he can still do something towards fulfilling the divine law, and preparing himself for again becoming the recipient of supernatural divine grace through Christ. Bellarmine, accordingly, represents the doctrine of Romanists upon this subject as striking at once against the two opposite extremes of the doctrines of the Pelagians and the Reformers; for that *by means of it* they are enabled to hold against the Pelagians, that "per Adæ peccatum totum hominem verè deteriorem esse factum," *i.e.*, by the removal of the *supernaturalia* without needing to deny the Pelagian position, that man retains, though fallen, all his *natural* powers and capacities; and at the same time to maintain against the Reformers, "nec liberum arbitrium, neque alia naturalia dona, sed solum supernaturalia perdidisse," without needing to deny that he has lost original righteousness.\*

\* Bellarmin. De Gratia Primi Hominis, c. i., op. tom. iv. See this statement of Bellarmine quoted, ap-

proved of, and explained by Perrone, tom. i., col. 723.

The application which Romanists thus make of their doctrine, that original righteousness was not a natural but a supernatural quality of man's original moral constitution,—an application which in itself is quite legitimate, and cannot be evaded, *if the premises are granted*,—to defend two anti-scriptural errors,—*viz.*, first, that fallen man retains full power to do the whole will of God; and, secondly, that concupiscence in the regenerate is not sin,—at once affords materials for establishing the falsehood of their doctrine, and illustrating the *importance* of the opposite truth as it was held by the Reformers. And it is a curious and interesting fact, and decidedly confirms these conclusions as to the falsehood of the Popish doctrine upon this point, and the practical importance of the opposite Protestant truth, that the most eminent theologians, and the best men who have at different periods risen up in the Church of Rome, and have taught so large a measure of scriptural and evangelical truth as to incur the public censure of the ecclesiastical authorities,—*viz.*, Baius, Jansenius, and Quesnel,—have all, more or less explicitly, declared in favour of the Protestant doctrine upon this subject.\*

There have been some Protestant writers who, though not deviating very far from the paths of sound doctrine on the subject of original sin in general, have adopted or approximated to the Popish views upon this point, though conveying their sentiments in different phraseology, and applying them to a different purpose. A good illustration of this is furnished by one of the most recent works of importance published in this country on the subject of original sin—the Congregational Lecture for 1845, by the late Dr Payne of Exeter. His work on the doctrine of original sin is one of very considerable ability and value, and contains some important and useful discussion, though presenting views upon some points which appear to me erroneous and dangerous. Dr Payne may be said to belong to the third of the classes under which I ranked the writers who have discussed the subject of imputation in connection with the universal prevalence of moral depravity,—consisting of those who have held to a large extent the *substance* of what has been generally taught by Calvinistic divines upon this subject, while at the same time they

\* See Perrone, tom. i., col. 738-9; titia primi hominis, p. 396, where the and De Gratia, col. 1238-9; and Le views of Romanists on this subject are Blanc's Theses Sedanenses; De Jus- very fully explained.

exhibited a great desire to modify or soften some of the orthodox positions, and a very unnecessary and excessive fastidiousness about the employment of the ordinary orthodox phraseology. This is, I think, the general character of Dr Payne's work on original sin, though the point to which I am now to refer, along with one or two other views which he propounds, may be regarded as a somewhat more important error than would be fairly comprehended under the above description.

His leading peculiar position is, that the gifts which were conferred by God upon Adam, and deposited with him as the federal head of his posterity, including especially the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, were chartered benefits, and chartered benefits exclusively,—*i.e.*, benefits which God bestowed upon him gratuitously in mere sovereignty, to which Adam had no claim in fairness or equity, because they were not necessary to the integrity or completeness of his constitution, viewed simply as the creature man; the enjoyment of which by him, or his posterity, God might consequently suspend upon any condition He thought proper, and which He might at once take away from *them* for any reason that would warrant their being taken from *him*, just as, to use an illustration he frequently employs, a nobleman guilty of treason forfeits, by the law of our country, his titles and estates, not only for himself but his descendants. This principle he fully develops, and labours to apply, both to the implication generally of mankind in the consequences of Adam's sin, and to the introduction and prevalence of depravity of moral nature; and in this way he is led to modify some of the views which have been generally held by orthodox divines, and to censure and repudiate some of the phraseology they have been accustomed to employ; though he has not succeeded, so far as I can perceive, by any of his proposed modifications, in introducing any real or decided improvement.

For instance, upon the ground of this principle about chartered benefits, he contends that the covenant made with Adam, in which he occupied the position of federal representative of his posterity, was not a covenant of works, as Calvinistic divines have been accustomed to represent it, but a covenant of grace. That there is a sense in which it might be called a covenant of grace, no one would dispute, for it was a gracious arrangement, manifesting the goodness and benevolence of God. There is a sense in

which all God's dealings with His creatures may be classed under the two heads of gracious and penal, for no creature can in strict justice merit anything at God's hands; but under the general head of gracious, in this classification, we can and we may distinguish between those acts which are purely gratuitous,—which have no cause, or ground, or motive whatever, except the mere benevolent good pleasure of God,—and those which, though still gracious as manifesting the benevolence of God, and not due on the ground of justice irrespective of promise or compact, have yet some ground or foundation in equity, or in the fitnesses and congruities of things. We think it can be shown that God's dealings with Adam, *after He had decreed to create him,—i.e.*, His dealings with him in regulating his moral constitution and qualities, and in arranging as to the results of the trial to which he was subjected, upon himself and his posterity,—were gracious only in the latter of these two senses; and that, therefore, the covenant made with him may without impropriety be denied to be a covenant of grace, as it certainly was not a covenant of grace in the same sense with the new and better covenant; while, from the general nature of its fundamental provision, it may without impropriety be called a covenant of works.

But we cannot dwell upon this, for we have introduced the subject of Dr Payne's work solely for the purpose of pointing out how strikingly manifest it is, from the explanations formerly given, that this doctrine of his about chartered benefits is identical in substance with the Popish doctrine, that original righteousness is not an integral constituent quality of man's original moral constitution, and necessary to its completeness or perfection, but a superadded supernatural gift. And the resemblance might be shown to hold not only in substance, but in some curious points of detail. We have seen, for instance, that many Romish writers have held, that the supernatural gift of original righteousness was not conferred on Adam at his creation, and that the Council of Trent intentionally framed its decree in such a way as to leave this an open question; while Dr Payne, in like manner, contends that those chartered benefits, which alone Adam by his sin forfeited for himself and his posterity, were only conferred upon him when, at a period subsequent to his creation, he was invested with the character of federal head of the human race. The fact that this doctrine about chartered benefits is in substance identical with

a doctrine which has been always zealously maintained by the Church of Rome, in opposition to the great body of the Protestants, and to the soundest theologians and the best men who have sprung up from time to time in her own communion, forms a legitimate presumption against it; and Dr Payne has not, we think, produced anything sufficient to overcome the force of the presumptions and the proofs by which, as taught by the Church of Rome, it has been opposed by Protestant divines. The old Popish writers applied, as we have seen, their doctrine upon this point, chiefly to the purpose of showing that man, even in his fallen state, had full power to do the whole will of God; while Dr Payne applies his principle, in substance the same, chiefly to indicate the justice and reasonableness of the constitution, in virtue of which men are treated as if they had committed Adam's first sin, and are involved in the consequences of his transgression. As the Reformers and their Popish opponents equally admitted the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, there was no call *then* formally to defend that doctrine against the objections of those who denied it altogether; but there are two facts connected with this matter, which may be fairly regarded as confirming the substantial identity of the Popish doctrine of supernatural righteousness, and Dr Payne's doctrine of chartered benefits,—viz., first, that more modern Popish writers, who had to defend the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin against heretical Protestants who denied it, have applied their doctrine of supernatural righteousness for this purpose, very much in the same way in which Dr Payne has applied his doctrine of chartered benefits, as may be seen, for instance, in the "Prælectiones Theologicae" of Perrone, the present Professor of Theology in the Jesuit College at Rome;\* and, secondly, that Dr Payne's work contains some indications,—though this topic is not fully and formally discussed,—that he would claim for fallen men, *under the head of what is necessary in order to their being responsible*, and would ascribe to them, in fact, a larger and fuller measure of power or ability to do what God requires of them, and thereby to escape from misery, than would be consistent with the views which Calvinists in general have entertained upon this subject. This is a notion pretty plainly shadowed forth in

\* De Deo creatore, P. iii., c. iv., de peccati originalis propagatione, col. 775, tom. i.

one of the features of his favourite illustration,—the case of a nobleman convicted of treason,—viz., that the actual traitor alone forfeits his life, and that his descendants, while they lose the titles and estates which, but for his act of treason, would have come to them, retain all the ordinary natural rights of citizens, and have no bar put in their way to prevent them from rising again, or *de novo*, without any remission of the sentence, or any special interposition from any quarter on their behalf, to the same position which their ancestor had occupied. Dr Payne, indeed, does not bring out any such view as this in regard to the natural condition of man,—a view which would contradict not only the doctrine of Calvinists, but the express declarations of the Council of Trent. Some of his positions, however, seem to favour it; and we are not quite sure that he was so decidedly opposed to it, as some of his general doctrines would seem to imply.

With respect to Dr Payne's application of the notion, that all that Adam in his federal or representative capacity forfeited, and forfeited for his posterity as well as himself, was only chartered benefits, to the purpose of vindicating the justice and reasonableness of the constitution whereby all men were involved in the consequences of Adam's first sin, we have only to observe that, independently altogether of the question as to the truth of this notion, its irrelevancy and insufficiency for *this* purpose are plainly implied in some positions we have already laid down,—as to the difference, in relation to this difficulty, between the doctrine which restricts the consequences of Adam's sin, in its bearing on his posterity, to temporal evils and unfavourable moral circumstances, with perhaps some slight deterioration of moral constitution, and that which extends these consequences to an entire depravity of moral nature, issuing, certainly and invariably, in actual transgressions; and the impossibility, *in this latter case*, of deriving any real assistance, in dealing with the difficulty, from God's mere right as Creator to bestow upon His creatures, according to His good pleasure, different degrees of happiness and of privilege. If Adam, as our federal head, lost for himself and us, by his sin, only chartered benefits,—gratuitously bestowed after his creation, and forming no integral part of his proper constitution as the creature man, necessary to its completeness and perfection,—then it is plain that the only aspect in which God can be contemplated as acting in the matter, is that simply of a Creator bestowing upon His

creatures different degrees of happiness and privilege; and this, as we formerly showed, is a view of His position and actings in the matter, which is utterly inadequate to throw any light upon the difficulty, unless it be assumed that men, after and notwithstanding the loss of these chartered benefits, retained all the ordinary rights and privileges of citizenship, *i.e.*, retained the power of escaping by their own strength, or by some universal grace furnished to them all, from at least permanent misery,—in other words, unless it be denied that men are now, in point of fact, in that condition of moral depravity and actual sinfulness, which Scripture, consciousness, and observation, all concur in proving to attach to them.

Here, we may remark by the way, there is brought out a confirmation of our previous position,—*viz.*, that Dr Payne's doctrine of chartered benefits only being lost in Adam, tends to involve him (though he makes no such application of it) in the application which the Papists make of their doctrine, that original righteousness is supernatural,—*viz.*, that men, though fallen, have still full power to do what God requires of them. There is no view of God's actings in this whole matter which at all accords with the actual, proved realities of the case, except that which represents Him in the light of a just Judge punishing sin,—a view which implies that men's want of original righteousness and the corruption of their whole nature have a penal character, are punishments righteously inflicted on account of sin, not indeed by the positive communication of depravity, but through the just withdrawal of divine grace, and of the influences of the Holy Spirit. And the only explanation which Scripture affords of this mysterious constitution of things is, that men have the guilt of Adam's first sin imputed to them or charged against them, so as to be legally exposed to the penalties which he incurred; and that this imputation to them of the guilt or *reatus* of his first sin is based upon his being their federal head or legal representative in the covenant which God made with him. All this, we think, is clearly enough indicated in Scripture; but beyond this Scripture does not go;—and here, therefore, our reasonings and speculations should terminate, or if they are carried at all beyond this point, they should still be strictly confined to the one single object of answering, so far as may be necessary, the objections of opponents; and lest, even in answering objections, we should be tempted to in-

dulge in unwarranted and presumptuous speculations, we should take care not to extend our reasonings beyond the limits which the logical necessities of the case require us to traverse; *i.e.*, we should restrict them to the one single object of proving—for this is all that, in the circumstances, is logically incumbent upon us—that it cannot be proved that this constitution of things necessarily involves any injustice.

Among the general suggestions that have been thrown out for the purpose of answering objections *within the limits now specified*, there is one which we have been always disposed to regard as reasonable and plausible,—as an idea which might be legitimately entertained, because, at least, not opposed to the statements of Scripture or the analogy of faith, and as fitted—though certainly not furnishing a solution of the great difficulty—to afford some relief and satisfaction to the mind in contemplating this mysterious subject. It is this: that God, in His wisdom and sovereignty,—following out, as it were, the fall of the angels who kept not their first estate,—resolved to create a rational and responsible being of a different class or description, differently constituted and differently circumstanced from the angels, and to subject this being to moral probation, having resolved to make the trial or probation of the first being of this particular class or description, as a specimen of the whole, the trial or probation of all this class of creatures descending from him; so that the result of the trial in his case should be applied to, and should determine the condition and destiny of, the race, just as if each individual of this class of beings had been actually subjected to trial or probation in his own person, with the same result as was exhibited in the first specimen of it. We think it might be shown that the application of this general idea, taken merely as a hypothesis, would furnish some materials that are fitted to stop the mouths of objectors, and to show that, while the burden of proving that this constitution necessarily involves injustice lies on them, they are not able to accomplish this. But we will not enlarge in the way of attempting to make this application of the idea, lest we should seem to be attaching to it an undue value and importance, or appear to be in any measure suspending the truth of the doctrines we have been inculcating upon *its* soundness and validity; and we hasten to observe, that the only reason why we have mentioned it, is because we think that there is a beautiful harmony between it and the