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ARTICLE I.

THE GENESIS OF THE NEW ENGLAND CHURCHES.

The Genesis of the New England Churches. By LEONARD BACON. With Illustrations. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square. 1874. Pp. 485, 12mo.

The general character of Dr. Bacon's interesting work was sufficiently indicated in a brief notice of it which appeared in the January number of this REVIEW. It is now proposed to enter into a more thorough examination of the principles which the venerable author has inwoven into his touching narrative, and which he seeks as his main design to establish thereby. The book he has written is not a volume of original research or elaborate learning, and claims to be only "a history digested from materials prepared by others." But while "it simply tells an old story," the author undertakes to give "here and there a new interpretation or a new emphasis to some undisputed fact," and addresses himself in so doing to "all sorts of intelligent and thoughtful readers." He does not write for "scholars, or the men of some learned profession," but "to stir the sympathies of the many;" and he aims, while thus interesting the popular affections and moving the hearts of the masses, to gain also their understanding and convince their judgment in favor of certain ideas of his own. Under the garb of a mere popular narrative of comparatively recent events, this is, really, an endeavor to strengthen

ARTICLE VI.

"UNTHINKABLE" PROPOSITIONS AND ORIGINAL SIN.

Nescire velle, quae Magister optimus
Docere non vult, erudita inscitia est.—SCALIGER.

"It is an astonishing thought," says the profound Pascal, "that the mystery farthest removed from our apprehension, the transmission of original sin, is a fact, without the knowledge of which we can never satisfactorily know ourselves! For undoubtedly nothing appears so revolting to our reason as to say that the transgression of the first man imparted guilt to those who, from their extreme distance from the source of evil, seem incapable of such a participation. This transmission seems to us not only impossible, but unjust. . . . And yet, without this mystery, of all others the most incomprehensible, we are incomprehensible to ourselves. *The complicated knot of our condition has its mysterious folds in this abyss*; so that man is more incomprehensible without this mystery, than is the mystery itself to man."*

The late Dr. F. C. Baur of Tübingen has undertaken, by a very summary process, to explode this doctrine of transmission and participation; and as our purpose is to examine the position which he has assumed against it, it will be quite in place to offer at the outset a remark or two defining the position he assumes in relation to evangelical doctrine. He was the founder and Coryphæus of the most destructive school of German neology, of which Strauss also (author of the *Leben Jesu*,) was both a disciple and representative; and having embraced the Pantheistic views of Hegel, labored incessantly during the last thirty years of his life to subvert and destroy the faith of the Church of Christ.† No man ever cast so much bitter contempt and ridicule upon all the Christian activities of the present century—its missionary

* Thoughts on Religion, Part II. Chapter V.

† Dr. Baur was born in 1791, was elected Professor of Theology in Tuebingen in 1826, and died there in 1861.

operations, Sabbath schools, the Evangelical Alliance, etc.—as did he in his lectures; and no one in Tübingen exercised so strong a personal influence over the students, nor deprived so many of the most precious treasures of their heart—the faith of their childhood, the fruit of the prayers and tears of godly parents, and the tranquility of the whole future of their life.* He denied that he was an Atheist; but only meant by this denial that he was a Pantheist. With him all history is simply a development of ideas; so that the history of the world is only a history of God, who, in and of himself, is not a self-conscious Spirit, but comes to consciousness only in humanity. It is proper to add that, though no one had ever looked upon the idea of a personal God-man with greater contempt than Baur, he yet, in his last moments, deeply felt that there was no salvation except in Jesus. And a day or two before he died, he was heard to utter the prayer: “Grant me a peaceful end, O Lord!” (*Herr, gewähre mir ein sanftes Ende!*)

The views of Baur on the great cardinal doctrine of original sin have become important to the Augustinian churches in this country, only because his reasoning on the subject (to which we shall advert presently,) has been recognised as valid by some who purport to be Augustinian in doctrine, and the conception is widely extending. That doctrine, as presented in the Confessions and defended by the representative divines of the Augustinian Church, seemed to awaken his peculiar aversion. That the race itself should have participated in the first sin, *i. e.*, should have sinned when Adam sinned, he treats as utterly nonsensical, and pronounces the proposition affirming it “unthinkable;” since, as he says, we can attach no definite conception to the announcement that a non-existing will should, in any sense of the terms, have contracted subjective guilt.† With him the testimony of Scripture, of course, goes for nothing; and the

* News of Churches, for 1861.

† The reader, by turning to Dr. Hodge's Theology, Vol. II., pp. 178, 179, 216, 223, 224, 244, may find references to the views of Baur on the subject, sufficiently explicit to render unnecessary here any formal citations from his writings.

views of men like Pascal, and Lord Bacon, and of the representative Church theologians on the subject, are regarded as deserving only of ridicule. And as our purpose in this article is to join issue with him on the ground which he has assumed as justifying his conclusion against the Augustinian doctrine, we shall first state briefly that doctrine itself, and then show, on scientific principles, (for he professes to be completely at home therein,) what weight can be allowed his assertion that the proposition affirming our participation in the sin of our first father, and that we *really* and not merely *putatively* "sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression," is to be regarded and treated as an "unthinkable" proposition.

In considering this whole subject, it is a matter of no small importance to us as Presbyterians, that there can exist no reason for doubt as to the meaning attached by the Westminster Assembly to the language they employ in their answer to Question 18 of the *Shorter Catechism*: "The sinfulness of that estate wherinto man fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature," etc.; for, as every theologian well read in the theology of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries knows, it is only a reproduction of the formula which, in the time of the session of that Assembly, and long anterior thereto, was current with our theologians, both in England and on the continent. A reference to this interesting fact will be in place here, as illustrating the discussion itself, and its bearing upon the present aspect of our theology. But we shall make it as brief as the necessity of the case will allow.

We find this little formula (with unimportant variations) sometimes fully and sometimes more briefly expressed from the very beginning of the Reformation. The *Confessions* constantly bring it to view; but as these are easily accessible, we shall cite it as expressed by a few of our representative divines. Beza, for example, in his work on Justification, presents it in the following form: "There are three things which constitute a man guilty before God: 1. *The sin flowing from this, that we have all sinned in the first man.* Rom. v. 12. 2. Corruption. which is the pun-

ishment of *that sin*, which fell upon Adam and all his posterity. Heb. ix. 27. 3. The (actual) sin which adult men commit," etc. Danaeus, the contemporary of Beza, (and Professor of Theology in Leyden,) repeats the same, *verbatim*, in his Apology for Justification, etc.

Isaac Junius (of Delft) thus presents it as a brief summary of the teaching of all the Reformed churches: "In the sum of the matter, all the Reformed churches *agree, and teach with unanimous consent*, in accordance with the Sacred Scriptures and the universal agreement of antiquity: 1. That the sin of Adam *was not a personal sin, but of the whole human race*, inasmuch as they were all included in the loins of Adam, and in Adam they sinned. 2. There was transfused a principle contrary to original righteousness, contracted from Adam in the first transient act of his sin, *and propagated by means of generation* to all his posterity." (Antapol. Posthum., c. vii.)

Laurentius (on Rom. v. 12) presents it thus: "The true and genuine sense of these words is, that all sinned in Adam as in their common stalk and mass, and so in him and by him. *It is altogether a different thing to sin in Adam and to derive sin from him. And we should carefully distinguish the sin which all committed in Adam, from original sin; namely, as the cause from the effect. For all sinned in Adam at the time that he sinned.*"

Pareus presents the formula sometimes very fully, and then more succinctly, and almost in the words of the answer to Question 18 aforesaid. After remarking that the first fall brought upon Adam himself *culpa actualis, reatus legalis, pravitas naturalis*, he remarks that "they at the same time come upon his posterity in a threefold manner, to wit: *participatione culpae, imputatione reatus, propagatione naturalis pravitatis*—by participation of the fault, by imputation of the legal guilt, and by the propagation of natural depravity."

Benedict Turretin, (father of the theologian,) in his remarks on Rom. v. 12, presents the same summary, as follows: "Our Confessions include under original sin the participation (or communion) which we have in the first sin, and the loss of original righteousness and purity which we have sustained, and the in-

herent corruption of the soul." The answer to Question 18 of our Catechism is obviously only a reproduction of this. And Poole has taken the fuller statement as given by Pareus, (which our readers may find in his *Synopsis Criticorum* on Rom. v. 12,) as presenting the acknowledged Calvinistic doctrine on the subject, and repeats from him that the three things in original sin are: 1. Actual guilt (or criminality) *by participation (culpa participatione.)* 2. Depravity by propagation, (*pravitas propagatione.*) 3. Legal guilt by imputation, (*reatus imputatione.*) And our readers will observe that during the Commonwealth and many years anterior thereto, no commentary on the Scriptures was so popular (and justly so,) with the Puritans as this of Pareus on Romans—a popularity in no way lessened by the fact that James I. had ordered it to be burned by the hangman at Oxford, on account of its stern advocacy of the principles of civil liberty, and of the right of subjects to resist tyrannical rulers.

The Church exposition, therefore, of the phrase, "the guilt of Adam's first sin," that is, as imputed to his posterity, is *culpa participatione*, and not his merely *personal* guilt or criminality. Or, as Dr. Thornwell (in *SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW*, for April, 1860,) expresses it, "We agree with Dr. Baird, that the imputation of guilt is simply the declaration of the fact. To condemn a man is to find or pronounce him guilty, and not to make him so. It is a verdict upon the case as it is, and introduces no new element." P. 188. "Our depravity of nature is the penal consequence of our guilt in him" (Adam). P. 202.

This, which was always the doctrine of the Church, and which is asserted by every Calvinistic or Augustinian theologian whom the Church regards as representative, has awakened from the first the envenomed hostility of the Pelagian and Socinian schools, and now of Baur, who, in view of it, exclaims with ineffable contempt, "What is an act of a non-existing will, an act to which the nature of sin is attributed, although it lies entirely outside of the individual consciousness? Can any meaning be attached to such a representation?"* And he

* See the foregoing references to Dr. Hodge's Theology.

pronounces the whole doctrine "unthinkable," *i. e.*, that of which no intelligible conception can be formed. He is, however, merely repeating after Socinus and his school, who sought to destroy the doctrine of our participation in the first sin, that so, by making this sin of the posterity of Adam merely putative and not real, they might prepare the way for abolishing the doctrine of a real satisfaction through Christ. For they well knew that a merely putative guilt or sin can be expiated by a merely putative satisfaction, which any holy or unfallen creature might accomplish. And hence the necessity that our Redeemer should be truly God, is at once set aside, and along therewith the doctrine of the trinity and its correlated truths. And thus, too, Baur treats the conception, though entertained and affirmed by every representative divine of the Church, from Augustine until now; and who, though fully aware of all the alleged grounds on which he and his followers denounce it, yet, *una voce*, affirm the subjective guilt of the race as the ground of the imputation to it of the first sin. They regard this as a fundamental feature of Augustinian doctrine; and no point in our theology was more frequently and more directly inculcated than this; and no error more decidedly rejected than the opposite view, asserted by Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, and Socinians, as is susceptible of the clearest demonstration.

The Church has never claimed to understand *how* we sinned when Adam sinned, but simply accepts the divine averment that "*all sinned*" (Rom. v. 12, 18, 19,) *as an explanatory principle*, akin to other inexplicable announcements of truth from the Holy Spirit; *e. g.*, that of the two natures in Christ, and the triunity of personality in the Godhead. But Pelagians, Socinians, and now Baur and his followers, have discovered that the announcement is unintelligible and nonsensical; and as he has directed the whole force of his learning and ratiocination against it, we shall proceed to consider his argument.

From the course of his speculation, and of those who follow him therein, we learn that not only must the sense or meaning of a proposition be clear in order to be intelligently received, (in which all, of course, concur with them,) but that the subject

matter, if we may so speak, must be such as is not only not contradictory in and of itself, but such as we can form an intelligent conception of, since otherwise, say they, it is impossible to assent to it. Now we shall not here stop to press those who have adopted this speculation of Baur with the necessity which such a position lays them under to reject also many others of the averments of revelation in the application to which this principle has been wholly discarded by all evangelical Christians, but shall consider the question simply as to the alleged correctness of the principle itself.

The basis of Baur's ratiocination is that words must stand for precise ideas; so that, when properly or definitely employed, that is, as signs of actual ideas, they must express a definite and intelligible meaning. For, if not thus used, they convey no meaning, and are therefore employed without meaning, that is, nonsensically.

For example. You resolve a proposition into the terms by which it is expressed; examine the words; and ascertain what ideas they convey. And if, as united in the proposition, they express an "unthinkable" announcement, that is, combine to express somewhat of which we can form no clearly intelligible conception, then, of course, that proposition conveys no meaning to the mind, and is necessarily "unthinkable" or nonsensical. The words subserve no purpose whatever, so far as concerns the conveyance of knowledge, which consists in the perception of the connexion or disagreement between ideas. But such a proposition conveys no idea; and how, then, are we to compare its announcement with actual ideas? And then, further, a man cannot assent to such a proposition, for he knows not what to assent to, there being in fact nothing to which he can yield assent. Such seems to be the argument in full, and it is applied to the subject matter in hand as follows: To say that a man's "non-existing will" committed sin thousands of years before the man himself personally existed, is a proposition of this character, and is simply nonsense; for it predicates coetaneous existence and non-existence of one and the same object; that is, it affirms that the thing exists, and that at the same time it does not exist, and

is simply to assert that the man acted before he could act, and existed before he could have existed. You can therefore yield no assent to such a proposition, and of course cannot believe it.

But, passing for the present the sheer folly of attempting to apply such ratiocination to the direct disclosures and affirmations of divine revelation, whose author can neither lie nor deceive, we ask, Is such a conception of the use of language the true one? If it be, then certainly Baur and Dr. Hodge (who, we regret to say, has endorsed his statement,) have, in thousands of instances, set it at naught. And we think it demonstrably certain that no man who has ever employed language intelligibly has *practically* so regarded it, whatever his theory might be. The principle that words may be significant, even when they do not stand for abstract ideas, is a principle which, ages ago, has been so thoroughly settled by science herself, that no well-informed mind would, upon adequate reflection, even think of calling it in question. And it is conceded to be a puerile absurdity to pretend that even every substantive name clearly exhibits to the mind a definite and separate idea. But we have no space for generalising, and will therefore come at once to particulars, in their direct relation to the matter before us.*

Take, for example, out of a thousand words which might be specified, the term *number*. Every person employs it, and claims, moreover, to employ it intelligibly. But take the term and separate its meaning from the signs, words, and things numbered, and what conception does it convey to the mind? To conceive it is utterly out of the question and impossible; and it is as "unthinkable" as Baur and Dr. Hodge would have the proposition to be which they have united to condemn. You can form no abstract conception of it whatever; and yet of what incalculable use are the numerical names? What would trade, commerce, or, in a word, human intercourse be, without those "unthinkable" terms, or their equivalents? Yet, according to the ratiocination referred to, a proposition which should contain

* The reader may find in the works of Bishop Berkeley, and especially in his *Minute Philosopher*, this whole matter treated with great force and clearness.

the word *number*, could not possibly be understood or believed, because you can attach no definite or separate conception to that term, and are compelled to view it as inseparably associated with the often incongruous objects enumerated. These two things, therefore, are demonstrably true: 1. That to obtain a simple, precise, abstract idea of *number*, is impossible; and 2. That the term, as an explanatory principle, is of indispensable necessity to human intercourse.

But let us take another equally common term, the word *force*.* Like *number*, it may be defined as "*that which*," but the definition stops short of conveying any definite, abstract conception whatever. It is "*that which* produces motion and other perceptible effects," and is of course distinct from those effects, unless we would make cause and effect the same. What, then, is that *something*, as to its own precise idea? The question is unanswerable; for to form any such abstract conception, is simply impossible; and yet, for how many speculations, subtle reasonings, profound arguments, in mental, moral, and physical science, is it an explanatory principle, or an admitted or necessary first truth? We have the *vis inertia*, *vis mortua*, *vis viva*, *vis impressa*, *impetus*, *momentum*, *gravity*, *reaction*, and the like. And then what earnest and subtle controversies have arisen amongst the really learned, about the true meaning or definition of these terms; though in no instance could the controvertist claim to possess a definite or abstract idea of the term *force* itself. Were these *savans*, then, acting foolishly, and talking nonsensically, as they must have been according to Baur's application of his principle? Or, were they acting rationally? And, on the contrary, would not he be acting irrationally who, on such grounds, should charge folly upon them? We have, moreover, erudite treatises on the *Proportion of Forces*; that is, on the proportion of things which no one can pretend to define—a proposition which, according to Baur, must be wholly "unthinkable," until we can form a clear conception of what forces really are. And

* See, in the *Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review* of January last, an article touching the use and application of this term.

then, still further, we have propositions relating to force which are of very great practical use ; as, for example, that a body with conjunct forces, describes the diagonal of a parallelogram in the same time that it would the sides with the separate forces. And by considering the inexplicable doctrine of force, how many useful inventions in mechanics have been suggested ? And thus, as an explanatory principle, the term is of incalculable use ; though in none of its multitudinous usages does it ever convey an abstract idea of the thing itself.

But it surely is needless to dwell further upon a point in the elucidation and confirmation of which all science could be appealed to. The very basis of Baur's ratiocination, therefore, is as preposterously absurd as he would represent the proposition to be that we participated in the first sin, or sinned when Adam sinned. And of course the argument he would erect upon it is of no validity ; since it is simply absurd to claim that it is impossible to assent to the truth of a statement or proposition without being able to frame in the mind definite or even intelligible ideas of all its terms—a statement equally in conflict with science and common sense.

These things being so, it is too obvious to require proof that since a single term may thus serve as an explanatory principle, though it be impossible to form any abstract conception of its meaning, a statement of fact clearly announced by divine revelation may be employed in the same manner and for a like purpose, though the fact itself so far transcend our intellection as to be even *unthinkable* ; *i. e.*, a fact as to the mode of which we can form no abstract conception ; as, for example, the announcement of the fact of a tri-personality in the divine unity, and of the two natures in Christ's person ; and that all sinned and became veritable sinners when Adam sinned ; and a score of other averments, which, lying clearly beyond the range of our intellection in the present stage of our being, God has communicated to us as facts. All that is needed in order to their intelligent reception by us, is to be authoritatively informed by God, who cannot err, that the thing announced is a fact, in order to justify our employing it for the elucidation of other statements which would

be inexplicable without it. Such a use of such a fact is perfectly legitimate, and in strict accordance with scientific usage, of which a single illustration may suffice. But that the design of the illustration, however, may not be misconceived, we here briefly restate that the position of the Church on the subject in question is, that the whole race of man became veritable sinners in the fall; that this is a matter of fact made known by divine testimony, and is therefore to be accepted as an undoubted truth. It is not necessary to contend that the *modus* of the fact is incapable of ultimate solution; but while we concede our inability to explain it, and have no hypothesis, either Realistic or Nominalistic, to offer for its solution, we do affirm that our inability to explain the fact itself, furnishes no rational ground for its rejection; and further, that so far as the doctrine of original sin and the correlated doctrines in theological science are concerned, the inspired announcement of the fact referred to, answers every doctrinal and every ethical or practical purpose, quite as well as a knowledge of the *modus* would, if it were really known, or were susceptible of the clearest scientific verification. This is our position. Is there, then, either in or about that position, anything which may justify a man who lays claim to but ordinary intelligence, in denouncing it as unphilosophical, unscientific, and nonsensical? Let us see.

When Sir Isaac Newton announced to the scientific world that gravitation was an action between two distant bodies, and demonstrated the fact, but declared his inability to explain it, a number of scientists at once applied themselves to the task of solving the question as to the *modus* of that action; whereupon Leibnitz (basing his censure, however, upon those attempted explanations) denounced the whole doctrine as absurd, or, in the philosophical sense of the term, *supernatural*; precisely as Baur and those who adopt his argument, base their denunciations in general, and their attempts at a formal refutation of the doctrine before us, upon unauthorised endeavors to explain what the Church has ever conceded to be inexplicable.

Sir Isaac Newton, however, had taught no theory on the subject; nor had he, in relation to it, even attempted to project any

hypothesis. He had, as above stated, demonstrated the law of gravitation, and had accepted it as an explanatory principle; but, as to those hypotheses which had been invented to explain the fact itself, he did not feel called upon to express an opinion, or either to accept or reject them. And moreover, he neither affirmed nor denied that some medium of communication must exist between the bodies referred to. And, therefore, when Leibnitz and others said: "We cannot understand this; for how is it possible that attraction should exist at such incalculable and inconceivable distances? We will not believe till we can understand the matter"—Newton merely answered that the fact existed; that its existence is demonstrable and had been demonstrated, and was not dependent upon their ability to understand and explain it. He would not deny that it may be ultimately explained, but insisted that he was not called on to explain it, in order to justify either his announcement or their reception of it as a fact.

This position, as every thoughtful mind must admit, was eminently philosophical and reasonable. And it is our own precisely in relation to the great fact upon which is based, so to speak, the church doctrine of original sin. God himself, in an inspired announcement, has given, as an explanatory principle, the fact of the synchronousness of Adam's sin with the sin and corruption of the race, and the synchronousness of our subjective ill-desert and the imputation of Adam's sin—truths with which no human intuitions can pretend to deal, without the most deplorable arrogance. We are, however, entirely willing that the Nominalists (if they can attempt it without imperilling gospel truth,) should explain, if they are able, the *modus* of the natural and moral connexion subsisting between Adam and his posterity. But their principle of representation must not, in that attempt, be carried beyond the limits allowed it in our recognised theology. Sin, on their own admitted principles, cannot be imputed to the represented until *after* it has been committed by the representative; and if imputed to them *after* it has been committed by him, it will hardly do to claim that this is reconcilable with the church theology; *e. g.*, with the statement of our standards that

"we sinned in and fell with Adam, in his first transgression;" for that explanation makes us not to have sinned until *after* he had sinned—a notion the Church has always repudiated. Or let the philosophical Realists solve the problem, if they can, on their hypothesis of identity. But for ourselves, having abundantly witnessed the disastrous effects resulting from such endeavors in the past, we, along with the Church, abjure them; and irrespective of any hypothesis on the subject, or of any attempted explanation, accept the fact as divinely announced, *that all sinned when Adam sinned*. And we claim, moreover, that no exigency exists, or has ever existed, which demands such explanation. It is not needed in order to the intelligent admission of the divinely announced fact; nor is it at all necessary in order to apply that fact to all purposes, both doctrinal and practical.

A late able writer, referring to the aforesaid position of Sir Isaac Newton, in relation to the antagonism of Leibnitz, offers the following impressive remark: "The law of gravitation, *considered as a result*, is beautifully simple; in a few words it expresses a fact from which most numerous and complex results may be deduced by mere reasoning—results found invariably to agree with the records of observation; but the same law of gravitation, looked upon as an axiom or first principle, is so astoundingly far removed from all ordinary experience, as to be almost incredible."*

There is, however, another and most instructive lesson to be learned from the example of Newton in this same connexion. While he occupied the aforesaid ground, he stood firmly, and his position was impregnable. But later in life he began to imagine that an explanation might be devised, and finally permitted himself to seek a philosophical solution of the *modus* itself. The result was precisely what might have been expected. But we will state that result in the language of Burke, who united with the philosophical world in deploring the mistake of this truly great and good man. He says: "When Newton first discovered the property of attraction and settled its laws, he

* North British Review, for March, 1868, p. 125.

found it served very well to explain several of the most remarkable phenomena in nature; but yet, with reference to the general system of things, he could consider attraction but as an effect, whose cause at that time he did not attempt to trace. But when he afterwards began to account for it by a subtle, elastic aether, this great man (if in so great a man it be not impious to discover anything like a blemish,) seemed to have quitted his usual cautious manner of philosophising, since, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on the subject to be sufficiently proved; I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us."* True philosophy and science, therefore, fully sustain the position which the Church has always taken in relation to the doctrine before us; and the attempt, by denunciation and ridicule, to set that position aside, can, as it seems to us, have no effect upon the really candid and intelligent.

And then, in regard to the explanatory principle itself, given by the Holy Spirit in the announcement that all sinned when Adam sinned, a volume could be easily occupied in evincing how immense is its importance in explaining the ground of the divine treatment of our race; the evils and disorders of earth; the divine interposition on our behalf, and in freeing the divine character from all imputation of the authorship of sin. But we cannot here dwell upon this matter.

The *πρώτον ψεῦδος* of the aforesaid false method of treating the subject, is in regarding the intellect as the receptive faculty of divine truth, to the exclusion of the moral nature—a point which we shall discuss on another occasion. And hence the explanatory principles that Christ possesses a human and a divine nature in one person, and that in the divine unity there is a tri-personality, have met the like reception with the aforesaid. Those truths, while sound reason receives them on the sure and certain ground that God can teach nothing false or impossible, are pre-eminently adapted to the moral nature, whose inner consciousness realises their truthfulness and efficacy in their wonderful adaptedness to its condition and necessities, while the mere intel-

* Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, pp. 194, 195.

lect, in its clumsy efforts to seize and subject them to scrutiny or analysis, that is, to precise, definite, and abstract conceptions, finds them wholly to elude its grasp. It is in this deep and sanctifying and saving sense that these divine mysteries have ever been potentially and practically realised in all their saving efficacy, by multitudes of the poor, the uneducated, and the illiterate of Christ's flock, with whom so many of the highest and brightest examples of the divine power of religion have appeared.

The student of ecclesiastical history will not need to be informed that the word *person* was introduced into the ancient creeds simply as an explanatory principle. It was not that the Nicene fathers, for example, professed to have any distinct conception whatever of the term in its application to the trifold distinction in the Godhead. They never pretended to any such absurdity; and their aim was to give expression to the disagreement of the Church with the errors of those who deny that there is any *real* distinction in the divine nature, and who affirm the sentiment attributed to Sabellius, that Father, Son, and Spirit, are merely the names of the different methods which God had adopted in revealing himself to man. In order to discard fully and effectually all such notions, they employed the word *person* to show that the distinction was not merely nominal, but *real*, though inexplicable; and so the Church has ever since employed it. And it is as unreasonable to require of us a clear, abstract definition of the term in this connexion, as it would be to demand of science herself such a definition of *number* and *force* as a necessary prerequisite to the reception of her utterances.

We find in the divine word that both faith and unbelief are predicated of the *heart*, and not of the intellect alone. And man being a moral not less than an intellectual being, it is as contrary to true science as it is to true religion, to predicate of his knowledge that it can consist only of precise, abstract, intellectual conceptions. A broad field lies open here for remark and illustration, but we cannot now enter it. But of those who assume this position, we ask directly, Is it the abstract ideas of *force* and *number* that are the foundation of true science? Or is

it the concrete ideas with their adjuncts? Every one understands the latter; but no man has ever comprehended the former. Is it, then, fatuity, or is it intellectual fanaticism, to insist upon precise, definite, abstract conceptions as essential to religious belief, when true science spurns the very notion of such a thing, even in respect to her very foundation itself, and when both alike require our assent to what we are wholly unable to explain, and the *modus* of which we cannot without folly even pretend to comprehend?

Our discussion has rendered it imperative that we advert to the fact that Dr. Hodge, in his *Theology*, (as may be seen by consulting the foregoing references,) indorses the argument of Baur against the doctrine of our participation in the first sin; and it may be added, that in consequence of this indorsement, that view is widely extending itself through the Church in our land. We leave to the Doctor to explain his reason for the procedure, and have no wish to intimate that it cannot be fully explained. But as we are unable to reconcile with our sense of duty an omission to call attention to the subject in this connexion, we cannot pass it wholly without remark. The indorsement is patent, and has been brought before the Church and the world as an accredited exposé of Augustinian doctrine; and this, of course, presents the alternative either of silently acquiescing in what we cannot but regard as a fatally erroneous representation of a vital doctrine, or of stating the reasons why that representation cannot be accepted. We have no room here to go into detail, but shall very briefly present the result of an extended and thorough investigation.

The Reformed theologians, from Calvin down, affirm the doctrine of the imputation to us of the first sin on the ground of our participation therein, and maintain it in the most decided manner. And it is important to observe in this connexion, that the Reformed Confessions draw no line of demarkation between original sin *imputed* and original sin *inherent*; nor has the terminology of *immediate* and *antecedent imputation* any expression in our theology anterior to the latter part of the seventeenth century. But while our theologians affirm the doctrine as thus

expressed, they, on the contrary, just as decidedly reject, refute, and denounce as fatal to the whole system of grace, the doctrine of the *gratuitous imputation* of Adam's personal guilt to the race for condemnation, and maintain (as our preceding extracts evince,) that the first sin was not Adam's personal sin alone, but also ours, by participation, and *therefore* imputed to us for condemnation; that is, there was in the race itself a moral and objective ground for the imputation. This doctrine, however, was bitterly assailed by the Socinians and Remonstrants, from the stand-point of *gratuitous imputation*, which they assumed in order to refute and subvert the church doctrine of original sin; maintaining most peremptorily that it was nonsense to suppose that the race could have participated in the first sin; and that that sin was, therefore, imputed to them only by a forensic or juridical imputation; and further, that it was not *the common sin* of the race, and *therefore* imputed, as the Church maintained, but *became* the common sin of all by being imputed to all. These speculations the Reformed theologians, both Infralapsarian and (for the most part) Supralapsarian, refute and reject, and insist that they are subversive of the whole evangelical system. Volumes can be easily filled in illustration and confirmation of these facts.

Now Dr. Hodge not only denies totally the doctrine of participation, but employs the terms *imputation* and *immediate* and *antecedent imputation*, interchangeably with *gratuitous imputation*,* as conveying the true idea of the doctrine of the Reformed, and thus represents *gratuitous imputation* as the very doctrine they taught as *imputation*, and subsequently as *antecedent* or *immediate imputation*; and this the Doctor does invariably. And then, from the stand-point thus assumed, he assails in the strongest manner the doctrine of our participation in the first sin, and so is led to adopt the foregoing language of Baur as expressing his own views on the subject; and hence, too, in his Revised Commentary on Romans, (and very often elsewhere,) he pro-

*See, for example, besides his Theology, his three essays on Imputation, his Commentary on Romans v. 12-21, and his Review of Dr. Baird's Elohim Revealed, in the *Princeton Review*, for April, 1860.

nounces the doctrine an absurdity which does not rise to the dignity of a contradiction, and has no meaning at all, but is mere Pantheistic nonsense and impossible. (P. 236.) As these things have been again and again repeated, and published to the world, we could of course do no less than advert to them in connexion with the subject before us; and we say, in great kindness to Dr. Hodge, that they certainly seem to present the alternative of either rejecting his representation wholly and in all its parts, or of accepting it, and so of conceding that, in relation to this vital doctrine of our theology, we stand on common ground with Socinians, Remonstrants, and Neologists; and consequently, that the Church view has been from the very beginning erroneous. Whether an escape from such a conclusion is possible, our readers must judge for themselves. But such are the facts in the case, and they can be fully verified if called in question.

In conclusion: If philosophy be, as is said, the science of causes and principles, it is of course obvious that she must possess, if not an *actual* knowledge of the causes and principles themselves, the *material* from which such knowledge may be derived in relation to any and every thing on which she would either form or utter a determination. For without this, her attempts at the development or explanation of either causes or principles can arrive at no result that is at all available. If true to herself, she can no more attempt to create her material by mere assumption and hypothesis, than would the natural sciences themselves. She has been defined as the exercise of reason to solve the higher problems of which the human mind can form a real conception; or, more happily, the investigation of the principles upon which knowledge and being rest, so far as those principles are ascertainable. But if she would deserve the name of philosophy, the domain of her investigations must ever be limited by the never-to-be-forgotten queries: *How* do we and *what* do we *really* know? For beyond the limit thus defined, she cannot venture, if she would be entitled to a moment's serious regard.