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*Ashbel Green*

ART. I.—*Address delivered to the Theological Students of the Princeton Seminary, N. J., at the close of the semi-annual Examination in May, 1835.* By ASHBEL GREEN, D.D.

MY BELOVED YOUNG BRETHREN—*Candidates for the Gospel Ministry:*

For the fourth, and probably the last time, it has become my duty to address you—on your retiring, for a short period, from this Seminary. On a former occasion, when this service was allotted to me, I endeavoured to show, among other things, that it is erroneous and idle to expect that improvements may be made in revealed or Christian Theology, similar to those which have been, and still may be made, in the secular sciences. This opinion has since been controverted in this place; and, as I am persuaded, not only of the justness of the opinion, but of its great importance, I propose at this time to offer something in its vindication, and something to expose what I apprehend to be the dangerous tendency of its opposite.

The whole argument opposed to the sentiments I have heretofore advocated, and am still disposed to maintain, so far as I have seen or heard, is one of analogy. It may be summarily stated thus:—Since it is undeniable that, in modern times, great discoveries and improvements have been

all the eloquence which mortals or angels ever possessed. God grant, therefore, that you may have a large measure of this holy anointing—grant that you may be able “to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.” Thus will you have the sure prospect of success in your ministry, of comfort in life, of joy in death, and of a crown of glory in that day when you shall stand with your spiritual children to receive the reward of those “who turn many to righteousness,” and who shall “shine as the stars for ever and ever.” Amen.

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*Erskine Alexander*

ART. II.—*An Essay on Native Depravity.* By LEONARD WOODS, D. D. Professor of Christian Theology in the Theological Seminary of Andover. Boston: published by W. Pierce, 1835.

THE above is the title of a prize essay, to the author of which a premium of three hundred dollars was awarded. This premium was offered by Mr. John Dunlop of Edinburgh, Scotland. The persons appointed to judge of such pieces as might be offered, were, the Reverend Jeremiah Day, D. D. LL. D. president of Yale college; The Reverend Edward Griffin, D. D. president of Williams college; and the Rev. Heman Humphrey, D. D. president of Amherst college.

Whether this method of eliciting the talents and stimulating the exertions of distinguished men, redounds to the honour of learning and religion, may, perhaps, be doubted. The motive addressed by such premiums seems to be of a nature too mercenary and sordid, to be associated with the high and disinterested feelings by which the person should be actuated, who takes up his pen to elucidate, or defend, the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. But if experience teaches, that by this means talents are actually brought into exercise for the public benefit, and the cause of truth is promoted, we ought to rejoice; and it may be admitted, that the prospect of obtaining a premium, does not neutralize necessarily, those more noble motives, which may after all have the governing influence, on leading able men to

come forward in the defence of truth. To which we would add, that the successful display of intellectual power is not so dependent on the purity of the motive of the writer, as that his reasonings and arguments will be vitiated, even if the motive which led to the exertion, should be no higher than a regard to emolument or reputation. It is true, however, that not many prize-essays have arisen to be standard works, and some of them have perished almost as speedily as the advertisement which announced their publication: but the literary world are laid under lasting obligations by the publication of the "Bridgewater Essays," which have been produced by the offer of a munificent premium.

In the present case, we are gratified that any considerations have been effectual to put in requisition the knowledge and talents of a writer so sound and able, as Dr. Woods. His reputation as a theologian and as a good writer, is fully established; and there can be no doubt, that his essay, coming as it does before the public, under such favourable auspices, as the one which has been successful in gaining so high a prize, by the judgment of men so highly distinguished among the American *literati*, will ensure for it a wide circulation and general perusal; which we wish as far as our influence extends, to promote.

The first chapter is occupied with general preliminary observations of great weight, and very important to the discussion which follows.

In the second chapter, the learned professor enters on the proof of depravity; first, from human conduct; and next, from the testimony of the Holy Scriptures.

Having established the universality of human depravity, the author proceeds to explain what is to be understood by *total depravity*, and then enters into the proof of the doctrine; and answers the objection derived from the existence of useful and amiable qualities, which are found amongst men in a natural, or unrenewed state.

The topics from which he endeavours to establish the doctrine of total depravity are, first, "passages of Scripture in which it is affirmed, or implied;" secondly, "from the necessity of regeneration," which necessity is universal; and thirdly, "from the experience, or consciousness of enlightened Christians."

In the fourth chapter, Dr. Woods enters on the difficult subject of hereditary, or *native depravity*. He commences by remarking, that this doctrine has been almost universally

believed, in ancient and modern times; and by sects who differ widely from each other, in other points.

The arguments on which he depends are, first, *the universality of depravity*, already proved. Secondly, "its early developement." Thirdly, "that it is not owing to any change which takes place, after birth." Fourthly, "its free and spontaneous operation." Fifthly, "the difficulty of resisting and overcoming it." And sixthly, "that it can be certainly predicted, *that it will act itself out.*"

In the fifth chapter, the Scriptural evidences of native depravity are given; and the consequences of denying the doctrine, considered.

The sixth and seventh chapters are occupied with the objections, which are commonly made to the doctrine of native depravity. In considering these, the learned professor is obliged to travel over much of the same ground, already trodden. As we have not room to give even a condensed view of his answers, it will be inexpedient to state in detail, the popular objections. Whether these can be satisfactorily answered or not, they cannot invalidate the body of evidence which can be adduced in support of the doctrine. Objections can be made to the doctrine of a particular providence, which no human wisdom is sufficient entirely to remove; they are most successfully obviated, not by a direct and demonstrative answer, but by showing that we are incompetent to judge what is suitable and proper for God to do; and the same method of meeting objections, is often found to be necessary, in regard to other doctrines of divine revelation.

In the eighth chapter, Dr. Woods undertakes to discuss a subject which is so dark and difficult, that we feel some degree of regret, when it is brought forward. It is, "*The state of the infant mind.*" The object of the inquiry is, to ascertain wherein native depravity consists; whether it is merely a latent principle, a corrupt nature, an evil disposition, which is the fountain from which the streams of depravity will issue at a future period; or whether *actual transgression* commences, from the time of our nativity. Dr. Woods adopts the latter opinion, and with much modesty and caution, endeavours to render it probable. As our views are different, we propose to enter, at some length, into a consideration of his statements and arguments.

There is so much that is excellent in this treatise on depravity, and the true doctrine is so clearly stated and ably

defended, that we feel reluctant to dissent from any thing which the excellent author has said ; and especially, because his amiable candour and undissembled modesty in stating his opinions, where they differ from those which have commonly been received by Calvinists, are such that we cannot entertain the least wish to indulge in severity of criticism, in our remarks on what appears to us to be erroneous. Besides, we are candidly of opinion, that the integrity of the doctrine of original sin, as held by Augustine and by the reformers, is not affected by the peculiarities of the Andover school. Dr. Woods cannot be accused of not holding the whole orthodox doctrine, as it relates to depravity; he has only laid himself liable to the charge of holding, *more than the truth*. He has so clearly and forcibly stated and defended the Scriptural doctrine, that we think that the whole Christian church is laid under obligations to him ; but he has added an appendage to the doctrine, totally unknown to the fathers and the reformers, which he thinks necessary to a complete view of the subject. He maintains, not only that man is born with a sinful nature, and that the infant is totally depraved, *in disposition* ; but that, as soon as born, it puts forth moral acts; so that *actual sin* commences from the moment of our birth. Of course, the new-born infant is a moral agent, and possesses every constituent of moral agency. We cannot but regret, that this view of the subject has been introduced into this valuable work. In all other points, there would have been unanimity among those denominated orthodox. Even on the subject of *imputation*, Dr. Woods concedes so much, and expresses himself so modestly and candidly, that although his views do not entirely come up to our standard, we should not have felt it necessary, in this review, to make a single remark. But the sentiments expressed in his eighth chapter, are so foreign from our notions, that we cannot pass them by without a few remarks, which we hope to make in the same spirit of kindness, in which Dr. Woods writes.

If the respected author had given a more definite form to his opinion, it would be more easy to join issue on the subject. What we feel the want of, is, a distinct idea of his notion of moral agency, and of what is necessary to constitute a moral agent. The doubt which we feel, rests on this point: does Dr. Woods suppose, that the infant of a day old has the exercise of reason and conscience, and some knowledge of God and his law; or, that, moral exercises

may take place in a mind destitute of all these? In some passages of this eighth chapter, he seems to lean to the first opinion; but for the most part, it seems to be implied, that the moral acts attributed to infants are mere *emotions*, or sensations, which possess a moral character, without any exercise of reason.

In stating and defending his opinion, Dr. Woods proceeds with much caution, standing for the most part on the defensive, and alleging that the contrary doctrine cannot be demonstrated. Thus, he says, "The fact, that moral affection is *not apparent* at the beginning of human existence is no certain proof that it does not exist." Because if it did exist, "the infant could not make it visible before arriving at such mental and bodily improvement and activity, as to be able to make known inward feeling by significant outward signs." Now we profess that this mode of reasoning is very unsatisfactory to us. It throws the burden of proof in the wrong place. But waiving this; we suppose, that if the new-born infant had the exercise of reason and conscience, it would know how to give expression to the sentiments of the mind. We respectfully ask, whether the same thing might not be said of brutes? we know not what passes within them, and how can we be certain that they are not moral agents? But a case more in point, will be that of the adult idiot. Suppose it be inquired, whether he is a moral agent: the common opinion of men has been, that such an one is no moral agent, because he has no exercise of reason; but according to the remarks made about infants, we cannot be certain, that he has not moral affections, although he can give no evidence of their existence. There is just as much reason for supposing that the idiot is a moral agent, as that the new-born infant is: for although the infant will, by the developement of its faculties, come to the exercise of reason; yet, we think that when first born, it has less exercise of reason, and less knowledge, than any idiot that we have ever seen.

The learned professor proceeds again to say, "That the *incapacity* of the infant child, to receive particular instruction from parents and others, respecting moral and religious subjects, is no certain proof that he is incapable of moral feeling." The very constitution of his mind, the "law written on his heart," may without any instruction from others, render him capable of moral feeling. We cannot help being surprised at what is expressed, and implied, in this

paragraph. Does Dr. Woods suppose, that the mere constitution of a child teaches it any thing, prior to all instruction? Or, does he think, that the infant of a day, knows any thing about the, "law written on the heart"? The young lamb has just as much knowledge of the moral law as the new-born infant. But what does this law require of the infant? If he is a moral agent, it requires him to love God his Creator with all his heart. But does the infant know that there is a God, and is it capable of feeling the obligation to love him supremely? Certainly it knows no more of God as yet, than the young of the sheep or the cow. If it does, we have something more than the old doctrine of innate ideas revived. But we do not suspect Dr. Woods, who is distinguished for his skill in the philosophy of the mind, of holding any such opinion, as that the new-born infant possesses any knowledge, whatever, of God or his law; yet the necessity of some kind or degree of knowledge to constitute a moral agent, seems to have been felt by the Doctor, in this place. It was a correct feeling, and if carried out, would have entirely changed the character of the sentiments defended in this chapter. Dr. Woods proceeds thus, "No one is authorized to say that the infant mind cannot have such emotions, because it is incapable of instruction from without. Indeed, the elements of knowledge must exist in the mind, before it can receive instruction." We must stop to ask, what does this mean? If by the elements of knowledge, the learned professor means, the capacity of acquiring knowledge, we are all agreed; but it is nothing to the purpose for which it was adduced; but if by "elements of knowledge," Dr. Woods means, "ideas," or the knowledge of certain truths, on which other knowledge must be engrafted, we have the old exploded doctrine of *innate ideas* revived, in all its force. He goes on to say: "Instruction on intellectual subjects does not originate the first intellectual acts, but presupposes them, refers to them, and makes use of them." Now this is a philosophy entirely new to us, or rather belongs to a system, which for want of evidence, we supposed, all the moderns viewed as properly exploded.

Again, he says, "The same is true of moral instruction. It does not originate the first moral emotions, nor communicate the first moral perceptions; but evidently proceeds on the supposition that they already exist."- - - "Much is to be done in the mind before *our* work can begin. There

must be various intellectual and moral acts, as elements of knowledge, as materials for us to operate upon. Surely then, we cannot prove that an infant child has no moral emotions, because he is incapable of receiving instruction from human teachers. He has not yet learned the use of words, nor the meaning of other signs. But his mind itself, though not capable of receiving instruction in these ways, may be capable of intellectual perceptions, and consequently of moral emotions, in regard to the objects perceived; and as these intellectual perceptions are the elements of knowledge, the moral emotions attending them, are the elements of moral character."

Now in regard to all this, we scarcely know what to say, except to express our surprise. But we wish that Dr. Woods had told us particularly, what those intellectual perceptions are, which the infant mind obtains independently of instruction from without. What is that knowledge which constitutes the infant a moral agent prior to all instruction? The new-born infant has perception by the senses, has the feelings of appetite, and the emotions of pleasure and pain; but in all these respects, its perceptions and emotions are the same as those experienced by the young of every animal; except that animals appear to have the exercise of their senses, as well as their other organs, more perfectly than infants. Dr. Woods sometimes reasons, as if the question were, whether infants are the subjects of feelings or emotions, and he proceeds, as if proving that they did experience these, proved that their exercises were of a moral nature. Thus, he says, p. 170. "It agrees with common analogy to suppose, that feeling begins very early, and in a very low and imperceptible degree."—"But a very short time passes, after the commencement of life, before a child becomes capable of showing some signs of feeling, and have we not reason to suppose, that reason as well as thought exists some time before? A child gives early and frequent indications of strong emotions, and strives to utter them, long before he is able to do it in the usual way," &c. All this we fully agree to, and believe, that such emotions or sensations, may reasonably be supposed to exist, not only from the moment of birth, but from the first existence of the soul. It is no part of our theory to deny the activity of the soul; or, that it is the subject of strong emotions from its birth, at least.—But this is not the question at issue. The question is, are these feelings of a moral nature? Their existence needs



no proof, it is equally held by both sides; but in these exercises of early infancy, is the young child a moral agent? If so, we see not why brutes may not all be moral agents. We are acquainted with no exercises of new-born infants which appear to have any more the character of moral acts, than what is observed in the young of animals: and we do not believe, that the emotions or feelings of the one, are any more moral, than those of the other. Examine the infant of a day or week old, and see whether you can find any evidence of such knowledge as to constitute it accountable for its present exercises. What would be the nature of the account to be rendered at the day of judgment? It must, if condemned for its acts, be found guilty of transgressing the law of God. What did that law require this young agent to do? It could be no external act, for it has no physical powers to perform such. The law of God, certainly requires of every moral agent and accountable being, to love him supremely as was before mentioned, and to exercise right affections to others. Is it the fact then, that God does require the infant of a day to love him? Impossible. It has no more knowledge of God than the young lamb has: it cannot obey such a law. Then a moral agent may be under no obligation to obey the law which requires love to God and our neighbour. What law then does it violate? It may be said, that the emotions may be sinful, when there is no knowledge; then creatures, which are, and continue to be irrational, through the whole period of their existence, may be moral agents. For aught we know then, all animals are moral agents. But how can it be supposed that the infant is a moral agent, or can put forth moral acts, without the possibility of discerning between right and wrong; and without the least feeling of moral obligation? But we are asked how we know that the infant does not discern the difference between right and wrong? We would answer, with respect, how do we know that the infant is not perfectly acquainted with the Newtonian theory of the universe? It certainly knows as much of the latter, as the former.

But we cannot consent to reason on this case: the subject does not admit of it. If any man, after impartial consideration, can persuade himself, that a new-born infant is accountable for the emotions of its mind, without any knowledge of God or his law; or that it possesses the requisite knowledge to render it accountable, prior to all instruction,

he must have habits of thinking and judging, very different from ours.

But Dr. Woods alleges, "That the infant is considered by all sober men as having a rational soul, a mind endued with intellectual and moral powers." And he asks, "Is not such a mind, from its very nature, capable of intelligence and moral affection?" To this we reply, that when we say, that an infant has a rational soul, *we* do not mean, that it has reason in present exercise: our meaning is, and we presume that of most "sober men," is, that it possesses faculties, which, *when developed*, will constitute it rational; but in no other sense is it rational when first it comes into the world. To the question, "is not such a mind capable of intelligence and moral affection?" We answer, not at present; not in the earliest stage of infancy. The new-born infant has perception by the senses, the feeling called appetite, and various emotions of pleasure and pain, just as other animals have, but has neither intelligence nor moral affection, at the present moment. A capacity of becoming intelligent and of exercising moral affection, when by instruction its powers are developed, it has; and it has moral dispositions, or the latent principles of depravity within it; as Dr. Woods has shown clearly in the ninth chapter of his essay.

Dr. Woods supposes, that his views of infant depravity, and of the moral agency of infants, agree best with the general representations of Scripture, and the general aspect of things in divine providence. But he has adduced no express passages; and most that he says is as much in accordance with our theory as his own. Indeed, there are a number of remarks, in this chapter, which are intended particularly to have a bearing on the theory, which maintains that there is no sin in infants, until some considerable time after their birth; and that when they become moral agents, they become sinful by their own voluntary acts. This doctrine we utterly reject, as believing that original sin exists in the soul from the commencement of its existence; and that depravity is hereditary, or derived by our natural birth, from the corrupt and degenerate nature of our first parents. Dr. Woods has, in the ninth chapter, given a correct view of the doctrine which we hold to be true. After giving a clear statement of this doctrine, and illustrating it in a very satisfactory manner, he proceeds to say, "That such a propensity to sin as I have described, exists in all men from the beginning of life, and that this consti-

tutes the essence of depravity, has been maintained almost universally by men who have embraced the other doctrines of the orthodox faith. It was held by the ancient fathers, except one sect, that of the Pelagians. It was contained in all the creeds of the reformed churches, in Europe and America. It was held by Arminius, and is now maintained by the Wesleyan Methodists. Even those in our country who object to some of the expressions and modes of reasoning used by the older Calvinists, still believe it to be a fact, that a disposition or propensity to sin exists in man from the beginning." He then adduces various authorities to show, that this doctrine has been held by all denominated orthodox in New England. He then proceeds to demonstrate, that this propensity, or corrupt disposition, is of the nature of sin; and answers the objections of those who confine all sin to voluntary acts, or actual transgression. In all these views and reasonings, we heartily concur: and, also, in the following just remarks. "The view which has been presented, is the one which has generally been entertained by orthodox divines. And does it not agree with plain common sense? Ask any one who has learnt the use of language and who judges of things naturally, whether a disposition to do wrong, is not a *wrong disposition*? Inquire what he means, when he says a man has a *bad disposition*; and you will find his meaning to be, that the man has a disposition to do *bad actions*. The disposition is characterized by the actions to which it leads."

Dr. Woods seems to be aware that there would seem to be some inconsistency between what is here said, and the doctrine of the preceding chapter. But he says, "the inconsistency may be only apparent," and he proceeds to make various remarks intended to show that the two sets of opinions may be reconciled. Now, we are not disposed to make the appearance of inconsistency the ground of our objection. Our objections rise much higher. We are seriously of opinion, that this novel appendage to the doctrine of original sin is contrary to the intuitive judgment of all impartial men, and will have no small influence in bringing the whole doctrine into discredit. And in regard to ourselves, we are constrained to confess, that if, in order to receive the doctrine of *native depravity*, we must also swallow this of the *actual transgression* of the new-born, speechless infant, we would be under the necessity of rejecting the whole. This is a doctrine to which we are confident we

never can yield assent; and as far as we are acquainted with the views and feelings of sober-minded Christians, there exists in most of them a strong repugnance to this opinion. It is, therefore, with us, a matter of deep regret, that Dr. Woods, whose influence in the theological world is deservedly so great, has been induced to introduce this sentiment into his otherwise excellent Essay; and we do hope to live to see an edition of this work, from which the whole of the eighth chapter will be expunged, and that part of the ninth which reiterates the same opinion. We are aware, that Dr. Woods thinks, that the reception of this opinion will relieve the doctrine of original sin from some of its most embarrassing difficulties. For, although he admits and proves, that an evil disposition, prior to all acts, is sinful, and consequently punishable; yet he adopts the following train of thought,—we will not call it *reasoning*, for it hardly seems intended to be such. “The *moral nature or disposition* of man, though in our way of contemplating it, *distinct* from action, mental as well as bodily, and though evidently presupposed in action, does not exist in such a manner that it can be considered and treated as *in fact separate from action*. What I mean is, that *there is no such thing as a moral being who is actually treated as a subject of retribution, while his moral nature is not in any way developed in holy or unholy action*. The very idea of a moral agent receiving retribution, implies the exercise of his moral faculties, the acting out of his disposition. That any one can enjoy good or suffer evil, without mental action, is inconceivable. I say then, that there can be no such thing as reward or punishment actually dispensed to a moral being, whose heart is not developed in some kind of exercise. The disposition, the moral nature does indeed exist; it is a reality; and God is perfectly acquainted with it, before it is made known by action. But it cannot be known to created beings, not even to him who is the subject of it, except as *manifested in external or internal action*. It cannot, any other way, become a matter of consciousness. And as it can never be known, it can never be recompensed, aside from its outgoing in action.” Then the Doctor, contrary to his usual caution and reserve, enters upon a curious speculation, which he doubtless intends to be received as a mere hypothesis. He asks, “But what if a human being dies, before his moral nature is in any degree developed? I answer: if he exists in another state, he will doubtless act

out his disposition there. As soon as he has opportunity, he will, if unrenewed, show himself to be a sinner, and will thus make it manifest, that his character was stamped from eternity by his descent from apostate Adam."—"Soon after death—no one can tell how soon—the character of the unrenewed mind is exhibited in sinful feelings and actions."—"If regeneration takes place - - - then the new-born child, dying before there is any opportunity to develop his renewed nature in moral exercises, will doubtless have a speedy opportunity to develop them after death, and will spontaneously love what is holy, and hate what is sinful." When we perused this paragraph, we could not repress the thought, O when will theologians cease from being wise above what is written! But it appears to us, that the whole of this speculation is far more suitable to illustrate our theory than that of Dr. Woods. Indeed, we do not see any danger of infants dying before their moral powers are developed, upon his theory, for they are moral agents as soon as they are born, and if they live only a moment, yet even in that time, they may commit a sin which deserves eternal death. But if the hypothesis is designed to meet the case of infants who die before birth, the difficulty can readily be disposed of, by extending moral agency and moral exercises to the very commencement of existence, which undoubtedly the scheme requires.

We would respectfully ask Dr. Woods to consider, whether it relieves any difficulty to suppose that infants are condemned to eternal misery for the first emotions which arise in their minds, after their birth? Why would it not be as reasonable to suppose that they are condemned for a corrupt nature, or evil disposition, which he acknowledges partakes of the nature of sin, and is the bitter root from which all actual sins proceed? There is certainly an inconsistency in admitting that the nature is sinful, and yet maintaining, as Dr. Woods seems to do, in the foregoing extract, that unless they actually transgress they cannot be the proper subjects of retribution. The very idea of sin involves the desert of punishment, whether it be active or inactive. A sin, or sinful temper, which cannot be justly punished, is a solecism. But here we see that the old divinity is attended with fewer difficulties than the new. The old theologians maintained, that the death and sufferings of infants were the punishment of Adam's sin *imputed*—the punishment of the children for the offence of their father, who was ap-

pointed their representative, in the first covenant: the new divinity rejects imputation, and attributes the death and sufferings of infants to their own personal sins. The very first act of the new-born infant incurs the sentence of death; for death cannot be the punishment of many acts. If one does not incur this sentence, the next would not, and so of any number. Death must then be incurred by the very first actual sin. And now the question between these two systems is, whether it is easier to believe that condemnation is to the whole human race, in consequence of the sin of one man, who was amply endued with all the knowledge and power and freedom necessary to his responsible station; or to attribute this condemnation to the obscure emotions of a sinful nature, which are supposed to arise in the infant mind, the moment after its birth; for, as we have shown, death, if incurred at all by infant acts of transgression, is incurred by the first, however feeble the emotion, or trivial the transgression. The old Calvinists, it is true, were careful to guard against the objection, that by imputation of Adam's sin God punished the innocent, that is, persons free from depravity. They insisted that this was not a correct view of their opinion. They distinctly maintained that death and sufferings fall only on depraved beings. But if asked why these children were born depraved, they would answer, that this was the consequence of the imputation of Adam's sin, and the very essence of that death which was threatened, and which was literally inflicted on the very day of the transgression, in conformity with the threatening of the Almighty. But if asked whether the punishment endured by infants might not also be considered the penalty of their own inherent corruption, they will be found divided in opinion; for while some attribute the whole to the one offence of Adam, as Paul seems to do; others, perceiving that original sin, inherent, must deserve punishment, united this with the first sin of Adam. Among the latter, Calvin himself takes his stand, while John Markius strongly maintains that all these sufferings are to be attributed only to the sin of Adam; and that inherent corruption is punished only negatively, or by a privation of blessings, until moral agency commences, and then every actual transgression has a distinct penalty according to its nature.

Upon the whole, we feel much disposed to recommend this Essay to the careful perusal of our readers. The points in which we agree with Dr. Woods are so important, and

defended by him so ably, and those in which we differ so comparatively unimportant, and so candidly and modestly brought forward, that we cannot but feel that we are essentially with him on the great doctrine of original sin, against all descriptions of Pelagians and semi-Pelagians. When the foundation is attacked, it is no time for the friends of truth to waste their energies and time in disputing about the precise shape and position of every stone which composes it.

But as Dr. Woods comes up so very near to what we deem the true standard of orthodoxy, it would afford us real pleasure to find him casting off entirely this novel opinion of the *actual transgression* of new-born infants. Most of those—we did think all—who hold this doctrine, deny altogether the existence of latent sin, consisting merely in disposition, and maintain that all sin consists in *voluntary action*; but as Dr. Woods rejects and confutes this doctrine, his system has no need of this appendage: it is in fact only an incumbrance to it. To us it appears to be as inconvenient to the consistency of the system, as a fifth wheel would be to a wagon; and we are persuaded, that at present it is held by a very feeble tenure; more as the relic of a theory embraced in very early life, than from any present conviction of its importance or certain truth. We cannot help, therefore, again expressing the wish, that Dr. Woods would give us a new edition of his "Essay on Native Depravity," divested of this, to us, offensive feature; and we will promise to use what little influence we possess to give it extensive circulation.

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ART. III.—*Bible Natural History; or a Description of the Animals, Plants, and Minerals, mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, with copious references and explanations of Texts.* By FRANCIS A. EWING, M. D. Written for the American Sunday School Union. Philadelphia: 1835. pp. 396.

*J. W. Alexander*

THE connexion between natural history and theological science is not at first sight apparent. Yet without any fanciful association it may be made to appear, that no man can satisfy the claims of theology without some familiarity with