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Samuel Miller

- ART. I.—1. *The Intermediate State: a Sermon by the Rev. Reuben Sherwood of Hyde Park.* New York, pp. 18. Appendix, pp. 42.
2. *No Intermediate Place: a Sermon delivered in the Reformed Dutch Church in Hyde Park, by the Rev. William Cruikshanks,* pp. 22.

THE discourse of Mr. Cruikshanks is a brief, plain, straightforward, honest and manly illustration of the doctrine of an intermediate *state* of departed souls; with a refutation of the doctrine of an intermediate *place* of the dead. Mr. C. goes forth into the field to meet a challenge; and he goes with his sling and the smooth stones of the brook, although he is not a Goliath that he has to encounter. He goes forth with his Bible, and tells us what God's word has declared in reference to the state of departed souls.

That there is no intermediate *place*, he argues from the plain statements of the holy Scriptures; from the fact that it is contrary to all the desires and expectations of the people of God; that it is contrary to their approved faith; that it is in direct opposition to the case stated by our Lord, in his parable of Dives and Lazarus; and to the holy visions of the

nature, became the enemies of God, and contracted the guilt of temporal and eternal death; unless deliverance and reconciliation should take place by the Son of God, the Mediator.

Again, "All are dead by the offence of one man:" therefore his offence was the offence of all: but theirs by participation and IMPUTATION, otherwise they could not be said to be dead by the offence of one, but by many offences.

Although it is truly said that the first sin was committed by Adam; yet not as a single person, but as the father of the whole human race; however it is not correct to say that original sin existed in Adam, or that Adam had original sin, for then the cause and effect, actual and original sin, would be manifestly confounded. The first sin of Adam, therefore, as we said before, must be viewed in a double aspect. In one respect, it was the sin of Adam, and was not original sin, but actual, *originating*, that is giving origin to the original sin of his posterity: in another respect it was the sin of his posterity, who were in his loins; so that in mass they committed the same sin, and hence IT IS IMPUTED TO THEM ALL. Thus this our fall pertains to our original sin.

Bellarmino's first proposition is, "*that the first transgression of Adam, which is the transgression of the whole human race, is original sin, if by sin be meant an action.*" This is correct, if it only be added, If sin be taken for an action not of Adam alone, but of his posterity, who, *in mass*, sinned in Adam. For thus this action was ours, pertaining in the first place to our original sin.

We close here our extracts from these witnesses to the doctrine of imputation, as held by the Reformers. The careful reader cannot but be struck by the distinctness and uniformity of their views. At this time, when the doctrine itself is perverted, and the opinions of the Reformers and others shamefully misrepresented, we should be glad to see the whole collection of testimony made by Viret, translated, and published in a volume.

ART. VII.—*Moral Machinery Simplified. A Discourse delivered at Andover, Massachusetts, July 4th, 1839.*

By Parsons Cooke, Pastor of the First Church in Lynn. 8vo. pp. 40. Andover, William Pearce, 1839.

Archibald Alexander

THIS is a publication small in bulk, but on a very important subject. It is the work of an enlightened and vigorous

mind, and shows that the author has bestowed much unshackled thought on the topic which he undertook to discuss: and although we do not agree with him in every thing, we rejoice that he has made the publication, and we consider the religious public as under obligation to him for the free and able manner in which he has executed his task. We rejoice especially that such a work has come from New England, and from one of her ablest writers and divines, because we believe they have been heretofore slow to receive the doctrine of Mr. Cooke, and because their ecclesiastical order is such, that they have peculiar inducements to employ voluntary associations in carrying on their works of benevolent enterprise.

Mr. Cooke does not declare war against *all* voluntary associations. He distinguishes them into two classes. The one class he calls *benevolent societies*; and the other he denominates *public opinion societies*. The former he considers as approvable and safe; the latter he condemns, as unscriptural, unwise, and mischievous. We concur with him in not proscribing every form of voluntary association. We think they may, in some cases, be made to promote the best interests both of the church and the world. But we should not be quite willing to adopt the precise line of demarcation between those which are safe, and those which are otherwise, which has been drawn by our eloquent author. For example, we are by no means prepared, on the one hand, to denounce all *public opinion societies*. If it should again become desirable, as it was on the approach, and during the continuance of the revolutionary war, for every good citizen to deny himself the use of all imported manufactures, and other foreign luxuries, we can see no good reason why every true patriot should not, in such a case, unite in trying to effect such an impression on the public mind, as to form a "non importation agreement." Or, if the fashion of extravagant expenditure at funerals, or other special occasions, should gain ground in any community, to a very inconvenient and mischievous degree, where would be the harm of forming voluntary associations for effecting a popular agreement to abandon the evil? We have no doubt, indeed, that many "public opinion societies" are deeply injurious to the best interests of the community, and that Mr. Cooke does not go too far in holding them up to public reprobation. But we have quite as little doubt that exigences may arise, in which there is no other method of obviating prevalent evils, either so safe or so

effectual, as by associating, to produce a salutary change in popular feeling and habit.

On the other hand, some of the voluntary societies which Mr. Cooke denominates *benevolent*, and of which he expresses his approbation, we feel constrained entirely to disapprove and oppose. The following short extract will serve to show Mr. Cooke's views of such societies, and will open the way for showing wherein we differ from him.

“I cannot agree with those who wholly exclude the voluntary principle of association in the cause of benevolence. When the object of the association is to feed the hungry, or to supply the spiritual wants of the destitute, and where large outlays are contemplated, requiring the co-operation of large bodies of men, I see no objection to the principle. Some would contend, that in such cases, the funds should be gathered and expended by the constituted authorities of the church. And that those denominations whose theory makes all the individual churches in their communion, but so many subordinate branches of one church, can conduct their benevolent enterprizes more efficiently, and more for their denominational interests, without separate organizations, and under the hand of the constituted authorities of the church, is what we, as Congregationalists, are not interested to affirm or deny. For Congregationalism, making each individual church essentially independent of the rest, and having no constituted authorities above the single church, has no hands to conduct benevolent enterprizes, on a large scale, but what is created by voluntary combination. All our associations larger than a church, united for any purpose, are, by the necessity of the case, voluntary associations. If, for instance, we were to conduct the work of foreign missions, by a society composed of a delegation from all the churches that contribute to the funds, or by such bodies as the General Association of Massachusetts, the work would then not be conducted by ecclesiastical authority. For Congregationalists know no permanent authorities besides a single church, and the great Head of the Church. The General Association is only a voluntary society, disclaiming all authority; and the Consociation admitted by some Congregationalists, is a departure from the principles of Congregationalists, and is but another name for a presbytery. Congregationalism, then, does not admit of our conducting benevolent enterprizes on any other than the voluntary principle.”

We thank Mr. Cook for the admission which this paragraph contains; and we hope that those who live a few years longer, will see his acute and powerful mind yielding to the clearness and force of the argument which his own concession furnishes, and declaring in favor of Presbyterianism. It is indeed true that the church can in no way pursue her benevolent enterprizes upon strictly ecclesiastical principles, but by means of the Presbyterian, or some equivalent organization; and there is absolutely no other that is so convenient and efficient. Had the churches of Massachusetts possessed this bond of union and authority, and employed it with fidelity, the growth of Unitarianism within their borders, would have been nipped in the bud, and that state would have been as free from this fatal poison, as her sister, Connecticut, where, as Mr. C. justly remarks, a superior and authoritative power, similar to that of Presbytery, really exists, under another name; and where the authority of consociated churches has been actually and effectually exercised, for expelling the Unitarian views from their ecclesiastical bounds. There never was a form of church government so well adapted to combine freedom with vigour; the most ample consultation of the rights and wishes of the people, with the purity, homogeneity, order and edification of the whole body; and at the same time, to enable the whole to act with concentrated power and effect, as the Presbyterian. If any should attempt to refute this, by referring us to the troubles which have occasionally arisen in Presbyterian churches; we may effectually stop their mouths, by pointing them to the far worse troubles which have arisen, times without number, in Episcopal churches; and to the still more tremendous schisms, and profligate disorders which disgraced and distracted the monarchical church of Rome, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to say nothing of other strifes and divisions almost innumerable, both before and after that period.

We have already intimated that we cannot agree with our respected author, in approving voluntary associations for all sorts, even of "benevolent" enterprizes. Some of them we entirely approve, and would recommend with all our hearts. The Bible Society, the Tract Society, the Society for Colonizing, with their own consent, the free children of Africa on their own shores;—all these we approve, and would zealously help forward to the utmost extent of our power. As long as the first named society devotes itself to the

circulation of the Holy Bible “without note or comment;” the *second*, to supplying the whole world with such tracts and bound volumes as it has hitherto sent abroad; and the *third*, to its professed legitimate objects, who can fear them? Does membership in any of these societies, call upon any man to compromit his principles? Does it alter the character of the donation, whether the dollar with which two Bibles are purchased and sent forth, came from the pocket of a sound Calvinist, or a miserable Atheist? The truth is, the more vigorously and successfully these societies prosecute their respective objects, as long as they faithfully adhere to their respective constitutions, the better is it both for the church and the world. It is impossible for them to do any thing but good without deviating from their professed plans of operation.

But other voluntary societies of the “benevolent” class, are not, in our estimation, so unexceptionable. If we understand Mr. Cooke, he would rejoice to see missionary plans and efforts, and the education of pious youth for the gospel ministry, conducted by voluntary societies. In regard to this matter, we are constrained totally to differ from him. We do not, indeed, undertake to legislate for our Congregational brethren. As they have no other possible method of pursuing these important objects, than by resorting to the principle of voluntary association, we cannot, of course, blame them for adopting the best, nay the only means in their power. But, for the Presbyterian Church—nay, so far as we can see, for any church, to commit the work of Christian missions;—the work of organizing churches, and planting ministers; and the work of selecting and training young men for her ministry—to hands without her pale, and irresponsible to her authorities, is, of all mistakes, one of the most egregious and perilous. In fact, we may, with emphatic truth, apply to such societies, the maxim of Archimedes:—Give them but a stand on which to place their lever, and they may heave the world. Allow a body of men out of a church to plant her congregations,—to locate her pastors,—and to select and educate her candidates for the sacred office, and thus, to a great extent, to form their character; and it requires no prophetic discernment to foretel that she must, in a little while, be wholly subjected to their power.

We do not deny that voluntary and irresponsible associations, simply for raising funds to enable the church to carry on her missionary and education plans—but leaving her, in

her own character, and by her own proper officers to execute her own plans, may be both safe and desirable. But when we commit to such hands the delicate and momentous work of selecting, training and sending forth her teachers and rulers themselves, and thus arranging, directly or indirectly, her ecclesiastical affairs, any child may foresee that we are consigning her to probable and not very distant subjugation to these hands, and, of course, to the risk of inevitable ruin.

But while we are compelled thus seriously to differ from Mr. Cooke, in regard to some of his opinions, we hail the appearance of this pamphlet with pleasure. It is seasonable, and, we doubt not, will be useful. It marks an era in the return of the public mind to just views of the subject of which it treats.

When the intelligence, the enterprize, and the public spirit of New England shall receive a happy direction in respect to this matter, we may anticipate that uniformity and tranquillity of feeling throughout our great American family, which will prepare the "watchmen on the walls of Zion," as to all main points, to "see eye to eye;" and enable them, as far as their different circumstances will admit, to co-operate for enlightening and converting the world.

We will only add, that while we think Mr. C. has done well in what he has said in regard to voluntary associations, we are persuaded much remains to be said and learned concerning a subject which the events of the last twenty or thirty years have invested with great importance. Sound principles on this subject, will not, probably, become again popular, but after much experience, much calm discussion, and very gradual approaches. We feel persuaded, however, that when enlightened practical wisdom shall resume her sway in this matter, she will decide, to the satisfaction of every impartial inquirer, that whatever else may be safely managed by voluntary associations, it will ever be unsafe to commit to them the conduct of ecclesiastical affairs; in other words, that every thing bearing on the training and investiture of the Christian ministry, and sending forth the ambassadors of Christ to their hallowed work, can be conducted wisely and safely only by the church herself.