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ARTICLE IV.

PROFESSOR PARK'S THEOLOGICAL SYSTEM.

BY THE REVEREND FRANK HUGH FOSTER, PH.D., D.D.

THE two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Jonathan Edwards, who was born October 5, 1703, might be worthily celebrated by the issue of a competent history of the religious movement of which he was the originator, and of the theological school which sprung from his labors. In the lack of such a history, the lives and achievements of some of the more eminent of his school might be sketched side by side with his own. Or some general view of the system of thought which gradually matured among his pupils might be presented as the still living result of his labors and the enduring monument of his genius. Or there might be selected some one theologian, who had drunk deep at the fountain of Edwards's inspiration, had been a diligent student of the whole period of the development of the New England theology, and had incorporated its best contributions in his own thought, who had himself been a great thinker and systematizer, and represented in his own person and labors the consummate fruit of the seed planted by Edwards; and his work might be set forth in fitting form as the best evidence of the real power of Edwards and the real meaning of his scattered contributions to religious thought, and might be reverently laid as the choicest chaplet, on the tomb of the most famous of American thinkers. If such a one were to be selected, the choice could fall only upon Edwards A. Park; for he was an Edwardean, an historical scholar versed as none other in the history of the Edwardean school, a profound thinker, a

consummate systematizer, an unequalled teacher, himself chief member and unquestioned leader of the school. And he would feel himself honored, were he still living, to be made the means of honoring one whom he ever confessed, under the great Master, as master.

But Professor Park was himself so great a figure, and surpassed, in the minds of many of his pupils, and of the present writer, his great master at so many points, that he cannot be placed in the rank of those who contribute to others' glory, except incidentally. It is a part of the legitimate glory of Edwards that he secured and retained the homage of such a mind. The power of the impetus he gave to American theology is nowhere better illustrated than in the fact that it by and by stirred and thrilled this imperial intellect. The greatness of his leading ideas is most evident in that they formed the chief working tools of so great an artificer, at so remote a time. As his school culminated in Park, and reached thus an end greater than its beginning, it attained the rare distinction in history of perfect symmetry and interior self-consistency. It was fitted for its time,—a great time,—and did in a splendid way a great work. The honor of Edwards is thus the greater for honor done to Park; but Park, like Mount Rainier among the mountains of the Pacific coast, not only honors and glorifies the group of which he is one, but has a surpassing glory all his own. It is in this position, not of solitary or unrelated grandeur, but of preëminent achievement and worth, that these articles would consider the theological system of Edwards Amasa Park, second Abbot Professor in Andover Theological Seminary.

The articles are, however, not to be panegyric. Professor Park himself never indulged, even toward Edwards, in uncritical and unqualified laudation. He is himself great enough to bear criticism. It shall be my aim to weigh and estimate, in the light of other systems and other

lands and times, the permanent worth of his system, as well as to set it forth as adequately as the limits of a magazine article or two will permit. But I shall criticise, when I do, as a pupil, as one sent out by this great leader to sit under other teachers and gather other fruits, and as one who feels,—amid all the modifications wrought in his own thinking by time and other influences,—that in the great trend of his thought, in his conception of theology and of systems of theology, in method, in spirit, and in adhesion to the great and cardinal doctrines of the evangelical theology, he is still an Edwardean of Park's school. And if any shall say that this is not fact but dream, then, till some rude awakening, I shall continue to dream the dream.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

Professor Park's theology was, first of all, *a system*. He began with a principle—Every event has a Cause,—but this was not assumed till it was shown to be a fundamental postulate of thought, and involved in all our thinking. When he had thus *proved* his principle, so far as it admits of proof, he proceeded to build up his system upon it step by step, proof by proof, proof resting in every case on what had been proved before. Thus his system was not a system in the sense of a mere orderly arrangement of parts, each however standing by itself, in no inner and vital connection with the rest, but it was a system in the sense that it was one linked process of proof, every step preparing for, and not depending on, the following, every step adequately prepared for by, and naturally flowing out of, all the preceding. It was like the wall of the cathedral, resting on footing-stones laid deep in the earth, course rising on course, each depending on what was beneath it and capable of bearing all that was to be above it, till the last pinnacle stood in its place perfect, secure in the security of the

whole wall. In this respect Professor Park's system presented a great contrast to that of his contemporary and life-long opponent, Charles Hodge, who brings in the doctrine of original sin in the first pages of his book to prove some elementary point, and thus builds the foundation on top of the higher courses! In fact Hodge had no conception of what *proof* really is, for this error of proving the point in hand by everything that bears upon it, whether it be itself already proven or completely uninvestigated and hence unknown, he commits hundreds of times. His "system" is therefore merely order of topics; but Park's system was always the system of a progress from the known to the unknown by rational examination and logical proof. If he failed at any point, it was not for lack of effort or for forgetfulness of the necessities of such a method of procedure.

The method of proof was the inductive, or the *a posteriori*. Park always proceeded from the known to the unknown, from the facts to the principles involved in them, from elementary principles to those pertaining to detail. Hence his theology was always subject to revision. Give him a new fact, and you have made necessary a new induction, and perhaps a new conclusion. Hence he was always open to new light, and manifested the most remarkable hospitality for new ideas. "Take them in," he said once, "and entertain them as you would guests at your table, until you know them; and then you can estimate their worth and their bearing on the truth." Textual criticism never disturbed him. If a text had to go, he looked to see if anything had been built on it alone, and to cast out such an element of his thought; for error eliminated he thought to be truth gained. The new theory of evolution did not trouble him. It had not "come to itself" by the year 1875, when I was myself a student at Andover and in attendance upon Professor Park's lectures,

and neither friends nor foes understood it. But while Professor Hodge, in his little book, was styling it bluntly "Atheism," Professor Park observed a scarcely interrupted silence upon it, except as he was ready now and then to ask what effect it *would* have on theology *if* it were to be found true. I remember very well asking him one day, on one of those walks and talks which he delighted to take with inquiring students, what the bearing of the doctrine of the origination of man by evolution would be on the doctrine of original sin. "What do we need," I asked, "to maintain universal depravity? If the race originated at several independent points, do we need to suppose anything more than an early sin, at one or more of these points, and the involvement of all mankind, by whatever process, in this early sin, to have all the elements now given in the common idea of the fall of Adam, and all the consequences that can legitimately be drawn from it?" His answer was, "No!" And the discussion, as it went on, showed how deeply interested he was in the adjustment of theology and evolution, though not yet ready to adopt either evolution or any such adjustment.

The subtlety, breadth, and comprehensiveness of Professor Park's lectures was another element of their worth that demands a passing mention. Having the undivided time of the Middle Class for the whole year, and lecturing about an hour and a half each day of the week except Sunday, Professor Park had time enough to go into the depths, —and he went. His minuteness of analysis, especially in his definitions, was very great. His consideration of "objections" gave him the opportunity of reviewing other systems of thought, of which he availed himself fully. Particularly did he thus discuss the older Calvinism which he opposed. The bright and interested student carried away a very competent knowledge of this system, as well as of Arminianism and Unitarianism.

The treatment of the propositions discussed was predominantly rationalistic. True, the starting-point was the biblical; but the method was rational, and the cogent elements of the proof, exciting the greatest interest of both teacher and pupils, were the rational. Not that the doctrines were formulated with little reference to the Bible, or that the Bible was belittled whether by the formal treatment it received or by implication. Professor Park's exegesis was always accurate, and quite in accord with the best of the exegetical departments under his younger colleagues, Professors Mead and Thayer. But theology in his conception was the *philosophy* of Christian truth. The Bible gave that truth, but why it was so, and how it could be defended, and what, precisely, it meant to the modern mind, were all rational questions, and constituted the burden of Theology. The biblical argument hence sometimes tended toward the dry and formal. Sometimes its force had been so anticipated, that it seemed almost superfluous. Even before the days of modern criticism, it had lost something of its power. The system must, therefore, be weighed rather as a rational creation than as a biblical elaboration. Nor did the historical argument, either the critical or the positive, receive due attention from Professor Park. It was sometimes appealed to in a general way, as when "the general opinions of men," or "the voice of Christian experience," were alluded to. But such a thing as the "verdict" of the scientific history of Christian doctrine for or against any position was never heard of in the Andover of 1875. Professor Park's education had, in fact, scarcely fitted him for such an appeal to history. He knew the history of New England theology intimately and well, and understood its current of progress and the intellectual forces that bore it on. But the appeals of Anglicans and Catholics to the church "fathers," by their specious adulation and irreverent reverence for mere men, and often for

men of little training and feeble intellectual grasp at that, awoke a scorn in the mind of the practical American theologian, who was as strong in the element of common-sense as he was in intellectual acumen. "Fathers!" said he once, with a flash of his sarcastic wit, "They would better be called the church *babies!*" The elaborate efforts of the brilliant Professor Shedd at Andover to bring history, in a totally unhistorical and really a crypto-dogmatical method, to the defense of an exceedingly "old" form of Calvinism, had not tended to help Professor Park to a better understanding or use of history. To its formal and real disadvantage his system was essentially unbiblical and unhistorical in style, and occasionally in substance.

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

Professor Park adopted and employed the distinction which had been handed down from the days of the deistic controversy, and had been so ably used by Paley, between Natural and Revealed Theology. His object, as already said, was proof. He desired to put the biblical doctrines upon a sure basis of irrefragable proof. This, and this only, would lift them from the rank of mere pleasing opinions, of more or less value, to that of the *truth*, upon which men might venture their immortal destinies; and *truth* was alone a worthy object of consideration to a Christian theologian.

Now, to the proof of the Christian doctrines, the proof of the Bible, from which they are derived, is essential. If the Bible is such an authority as the church has always said, it is a revelation from God. To prove the Bible, you must therefore first prove the being and benevolence of God; and you must do it without the Bible, since you are not permitted to commit any circle in your reasoning. Hence Natural Theology must precede Revealed. Professor Park therefore begins here, and lays down as his

first proposition that every event has a cause. But here he meets at once with the *crux* of theology. To prove the Bible he has to prove a benevolent God, because a God not benevolent could never be relied upon to give a revelation to man however great man's need. But the benevolence of God is not a doctrine of pure Natural Theology, which can never, and has never, either originated or proved it; but it is historically and logically itself a doctrine of the Bible. Hence, if you need a doctrine of the divine benevolence to prove the Bible, you need a Bible to prove the divine benevolence. How shall this circle be escaped? Ritschl recognized this peculiarity of the argument, and stated it better than any recent theologian, but Park also fully perceived it, and sought to do full justice to it. In fact, its necessities determined the entire course of the argument of the Natural Theology.

Park, therefore, began by giving "some elemental idea of God, not the whole being."¹ He defines God as "the Mind which other minds are obligated to worship, because they are ultimately dependent upon it." The existence of such a being can be proved by logical arguments from nature proceeding on the basis of the principle of causation; and to establish this is, for the time, Park's sole effort. He takes up successively the arguments for a creator, a preserver, a contriver, a natural governor and a moral governor. In the discussion of these, however acute, comprehensive, and profound it was, there was nothing which differed essentially from the general positions of Natural Theology as developed by his predecessors. Yet one innovation had already been made, and this was the introduction of a "biblical argument" on point after point.

¹I employ, to refresh my memory in writing this article, the excellent notes of Rev. Henry M. Tenney, D.D., who was a very accurate student, and heard the lectures in 1865. I regret that I have not access at present to my own stenographic notes of 1875.

He expressly says that he takes the Bible for these arguments only "as a book written by sages," or as "containing the wisdom of the world." But when the argument is completed, he devotes more careful attention to this biblical argument. He remarks that "some men believe that all truths in Natural Theology are derived from the Bible: others believe that the Bible is drawn from Natural Theology." His own position is that the Bible is "a part of Natural Theology." Just as we infer a God from the solar system considered as a fact, so we infer God from the perfectness of the biblical description of Christ. The Bible, as a record of assertions, rests upon Natural Theology, and it proves the existence of God not by the assertion that there is a God, *as an assertion*, but by the fact that it *makes* such an assertion, by this *act*; just as Webster proved he was alive not by the *assertion* "I still live," but by the *act* of speaking. The Bible as it is, with all its contents of Natural Theology, demands a cause, and that cause must be God. "How happens it that we may find in the writings of Peter a system of Natural Theology more in accordance with later times than in Aristotle or all the ancients? Philosophers grasped only by piecemeal that which fishermen have given in fullness and perfection. All the results of modern investigation can detect no fallacy in the statements of these fishermen who purport to have been divinely inspired." The accord of the Bible with Natural Theology is also seen in the fact that the Bible is explained, in passages otherwise dark, by Natural Theology; and this, as a fact, demands an explanation, which it finds only in the existence of God.

This is the first stage of Professor Park's answer to the problem of getting a true order, which shall avoid the fallacy of circle, into the argument. He has incidentally brought out the fact that the Bible, as a text-book of Natural Theology, precedes the modern treatises. He now

takes up successively the "natural attributes" of God,—his self-existence, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, immutability, and unity,—in treating all of which he introduces, on the same basis as above, the "biblical argument." He is thus brought finally to the benevolence of God. How does he prove this attribute, to the proof of which the Bible is essential?

It is characteristic of the method of Professor Park that he often makes an objection against one point of his argument the gateway through which he introduces the following point. Thus each argument, like the pinnacle of the flying buttress, solidifies and strengthens by its weight that which goes before, while itself dependent upon it. From the proof of the omnipotence of God arises the question, How can he then be benevolent, when he has not prevented sin? He could but would not, or else he did not because he could not. The last alternative being excluded by the argument for God's omnipotence, is not his benevolence impugned by his permission of sin? Before he advances to the positive argument for the divine benevolence, Park therefore discusses the prevention of sin, and as a preparatory argument to this, a *lemma*, if I may so say, he discusses the Immortality of the Soul.

The argument for Immortality is relatively weak and somewhat inconclusive. Park was accustomed to acknowledge this; but he added immediately, "We do not need much proof of such a proposition." He "took" it (*lemma*), in part, as an hypothesis, more or less reasonable, and helpful for his argument even in this hypothetical form. But he felt, no doubt, also that there was little real disposition or ground for denying it. He practically rolled the burden of cogent proof upon the shoulders of the deniers. Yet he presented such an argument as his inability to use at this point the testimony of Jesus, who "brought immortality to light," left to him. There is nothing decisive (in

the phenomena of death, etc.) against the supposition that the soul is immortal. The fact that the soul exists up to the moment of death, and our belief that nothing that has once existed has ever been annihilated, point to the probability of immortality. Then, man is fitted for immortal existence by the scope and character of his powers which find only a partial employment here upon the earth. In fact, he has generally to die just as he is on the brink of some discovery or achievement greater than any he has been able to make; and, so far as we can see, he might go on developing greater powers of acquisition and labor forever. He is made for eternity, and he ought to have eternity in which to realize the idea implanted in his very being. This argument is confirmed by the character of God, who, whether benevolent or not (the point under argumentation), is certainly *skillful* and cannot be believed to have done so unskillful a thing as to make such a creature as man, for the brief space of an existence of seventy years! Man, if destined to extinction at death, is out of place, and constitutes the greatest riddle of the universe, and cannot be so explained as to leave the universe of which he is so important a part, rational. This preparatory, and chiefly negative, argument is reinforced by the biblical statements, which are given in all their fullness; but the Bible is still "a collection of wise sayings," and not a source of decisive authority.

The idea of immortality partially answers those objections to the goodness of God which have been already summarized. All that is incidental,—the pain in the world, the frustration of powers in the range of their expected and appropriate accomplishment by death, and all the other disorder of the world,—presents no serious obstacle if it is understood that there remains another life in which inequalities shall be removed and mysteries resolved. But there still remains a fundamental difficulty. Pain may

be disciplinary, and may lose its appearance as an evil in view of the greater good to come. But *sin* is different. It is rebellion against God, it is *moral* disorder of the soul, it introduces disharmony and disease into the very highest and most central that there is in man, into his conscience and all his moral faculties. It is structural evil. How can it be explained or palliated? And how can God be truly good, and have his highest choices fixed on holiness, if he permits it? These questions lead to the deeper problem, that of the Permission of Sin.

Some have answered this problem by advancing the position that the permission of sin is bound up with the gift of free will. Grant free will, and sin *may* follow. The New Haven school, under the lead of that great and original thinker, N. W. Taylor, declined positively to take this position, but said, hypothetically, "Perhaps God cannot prevent sin in a moral system." This answer commended itself to Park by its hypothetical form, for both Taylor and he were laboring to remove objections to God's benevolence, and "a reasonable hypothesis is as complete a refutation of an objection as a positive fact." *If* God cannot prevent sin, then he is benevolent, *although* sin exists. But the New Haven answer did not commend itself to Park in another aspect. It was "unphilosophical," because inventing an hypothesis to explain something that could better be explained in some other way; and "too specific," because fixing the difficulty in the freedom of the will, whereas it might lie elsewhere. Accordingly, to the question, *Can* God prevent sin in a moral system (i.e., a system of agents possessing free will and governed in accordance with that fact), Park replied directly, Yes. The argument for the answer is, in a word, that it involves no breach of a man's freedom to prevent him by persuasives from doing what he is still perfectly able to do; and the argument is reënforced by the example of the angels in heaven.

But the question now assumes a new form, Can God prevent sin in the *best* moral system? Or (without change of idea), Can God *wisely* or *consistently* prevent sin in the best moral system? Here Professor Park's answer is, Perhaps not. The leading thought under this department of the discussion is that the prevention of all sin might require a degree of direct oversight of the members of the system,—a degree of tutelage and a consequent degree of dependence, inconsistent with their moral strength; and greater strength with some sin (finally overruled) may be better than unbroken holiness and the consequent weakness.

The force of Park's position here depends upon his view of the moral universe. He regards it as constituted by God as a system, or, to use modern phrase, under general laws. Among the facts of the system are free will, and its correlate, that a free will is to be governed *only by persuasives* and never by forces. These "persuasives" constitute the great mass of things, principles, and events in the world. Not independent of God, they proceed under his divine government; but they have been wisely established and are not to be interfered with, even by God himself, except for great and wise reasons. It is better that man should grow into righteousness and true freedom under such system, than that he should have righteousness thrust upon him, and be maintained in it, even by persuasives alone, if for the sake of these extraordinary persuasives, the constituted system should be destroyed.

We shall see, ere we are done, that this is not Park's full mind on this theme, and shall detect the inconsistency which lurks in his idea of freedom; but for the present we are to mark the play given here to the free will of man, the value set by God upon it, its sacredness before him, and the method of his control.

Park's final answer, therefore, to the objection against the benevolence of God, derived from the existence of sin

is this, that our limitations and our ignorance are such that we must acknowledge the possibility that sin was permitted for wise and good reasons. Thus he comes to the question of the benevolence of God unhampered by this objection, and can answer directly from the facts that God is good. The conduct of the argument is so characteristic of Park that we may profitably devote more attention to it than to any hitherto.

After calling the attention to the fact that the previous course of argument has now removed objections to the divine benevolence arising from the existence of sin, of the various other moral evils (such as indolence), and of pain, Park argues (1) from God's *natural* attributes to his benevolence. "Thus far we have found God absolutely perfect; therefore we anticipate the same in all his attributes." This form of argument, an application of the principle of the continuity of the universe, was a favorite one with him. "If a rope sustains a certain weight and gives no signs of breaking, we unhesitatingly intrust more weight to it. If it has borne so much, it will bear more." He then proceeds: "The natural attributes present him the strongest motives to be, and take from him all motives to be otherwise than, benevolent and good." Men are inclined to envy and other sins because they have so vague ideas of the real meanness of these sins, and so obscure ideas of the opposite virtues. But the omniscience of God lifts him above all such obscurity. He has no motive to be malevolent. Again (2) the natural emotions, the taste for the noble and beautiful, argue for benevolence, for sin is most ignoble, and virtue, benevolence, is most sublime. A being having infinite conceptions of the grandeur of virtue could not fall into sin. (3) The phenomena of the universe constitute another argument. Its *physical* phenomena, for "we might have been in such a state that every ray of light would pierce the eye as a dagger and

every taste be acrid. But happiness is the law, misery the exception." "The vast preponderance of contrivances are for our good." The *moral* phenomena furnish a parallel argument. "We might have been constituted so as to feel joy at the sight of pain; but now, when we commit a vile act we are ashamed, and pain in others calls forth our pity. We must take the future life into account to get the full force of this argument. The *tendencies* here are towards good: they will have become prevailing and exclusive of all others there. Now, the fact that God has made us with these moral feelings, inclining us to the right, indicates that he is good, for *no Creator would render it necessary for his creatures to despise him*. But if he is not morally good, his creatures *must* feel that they occupy a higher moral level than he."

Professor Park was accustomed, like other great thinkers, to make sudden plunges to the very depths of thought. Such a plunge occurs at this point of his argument. He enters here, according to his custom, certain "objections." Among them is this, that "after all, God, to make us more miserable, may have deceived us, and made himself *appear* to us benevolent, while he actually is malevolent." Park shows that this objection involves the fundamental skepticism of doubting the trustworthiness of our faculties. Lotze says in his "Metaphysik," when a man comes forward with this "groundless perhaps"—perhaps everything may be other than it necessarily seems—"I simply turn my back upon him and go my way." In the freedom of the academic lecture-room, Park put the same answer thus: "If the correctness of our faculties be denied, we must reply, *after the manner of Lord Chesterfield*, You lie!"

Then (4) the moral instincts of men, (5) the accordance of the divine benevolence with the nature of things (contrivances for pain may be for our good), and (6) the general opinions of men, are urged.

Finally (7) the biblical argument, the Bible's direct assertions, its structure, and particular doctrines, like the atonement, is presented. The argument is still from the Bible as a wise book, and may be thus expressed: The greatest scheme of thought which the world has ever produced, the biblical, teaches the benevolence of God; therefore it is true.¹

Now, this, we submit, is a great and a valid argument. It has committed no circles, but has marched straight from the first premise to the final conclusion. It makes the benevolence of God credible and reasonable,—vastly more reasonable than the conception of his indifference to human needs or his malevolence. It gives a ground of belief, and of further argument. Nor can it be said that it draws its materials improperly from the Scriptures. Ritschl says that the idea of *order* is a biblical idea. This is true; but it is also a pre-biblical idea, for Plato has the idea of order and of justice, though not of the divine goodness, in its full Christian sense. Park rests heavily upon order and reason in the argument. But the argument may be criticised as not being complete. It does not give the *full* Christian idea of the divine benevolence. We do not see "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It is a "benevolent" God, but not a "Father," and not *the* "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Park would undoubtedly have admitted this objection at once. He would have said, "But I am not done yet." He has not got the full idea of God now, any more than at the beginning; nor can he get it till the entire dogmatic process is performed. But he has enough even now to base his next argument upon, enough to prove that we have a God who, in condescension to man's need, will make revelation of himself and provide a Bible. And then, having at last a Bible, he can

¹ Compare Lotze's: "Es ist ja unmöglich dass das grösste von allem denkbaren nicht wäre."

use the biblical argument as sufficient and final, and present the benevolence of God in its full sweep as that love of God by which he "sent his only Son."

But the treatment of the divine benevolence, even at this stage, is not yet done. Great ideas are never satisfactorily disposed of in Park's view till they have been fully defined and exhibited in their various relations; and this labor he proceeds now to perform.

It is Park's position not merely that God is good, but that the divine goodness comprehends his entire moral nature. God has but one, comprehensive moral attribute, and that is benevolence. He here follows Edwards, whose posthumous treatise on Virtue became the most important of his works, and laid the foundation of the Edwardean school. We enter into moral relations with all sentient being, and that which constitutes the basis of these relations is the capacity of feeling itself. Happiness, the gratification of the feeling, is the object sought ultimately in all moral action, and when a sentient being is perceived to be in want, conscience at once and imperatively enjoins upon us the *duty* of satisfying that want, so far as possible. The active choice to do this is benevolence, and it is the primary and fundamental moral action. Happiness is, of course, not to be taken in so restricted a sense that it shall embrace nothing but physical gratification. The highest happiness of the highest beings is derived from the approbation of conscience, and thus requires their holiness. The "sentient" being who is also a moral being, finds his happiness chiefly in this highest element of his nature. But, high or low, that which calls out moral choice in respect to him is his capacity of feeling, his value, his worth; and the benevolent choice of his worth, the choice to promote it,—holiness first, but happiness finally,—is virtue, and this alone is virtue.

These are, according to Edwards, the fundamental prin-

ciples of human ethics; and both Edwards and Park apply them immediately to God. We know God by knowing ourselves. His "great, generic moral attribute" is love, and every other moral attribute is only a new application of this attribute according to the differing circumstances in which God is placed. He views men (and other beings) primarily as simply capable of happiness; and he then chooses their happiness. Viewed as having moral character, men are regarded by God with "complacential benevolence," that is, either approved as holy or disapproved as sinful. God "loves all men" with *primary* benevolence, but "hates the wicked" with complacential benevolence,—for benevolence can hate, *must* hate the wicked. But there is a "consequential benevolence," or justice, which Park defines as "the cherishing of the love to the right character of sentient beings followed by the cherishing of the desire to reward the character,—or the reverse, a hatred of the wrong character and desire to punish it." This justice is of two sorts, "distributive" and "public." The former is "a choice to make such an expression of approval or disapproval to an obedient or disobedient agent as shall be to that agent a merited recompense to his act." The latter is "a choice of expressing complacency or displacency to an obedient or disobedient agent on the ground of, and in proportion to, the usefulness of the expression." The latter definition was not the one always given by Park, and the idea may, perhaps, be better expressed for the present time if public justice be defined as "such treatment of an agent in view of his obedience or disobedience as shall most promote his and all others' holiness and happiness." Consequential benevolence is also "grace," which is "the choice of a ruler to bestow favor upon a subject when the distributive justice of the ruler prompts him to inflict evil on that subject," or it is "a choice to favor the guilty."

As to justice, two things are to be noted as we pass on. Park teaches distributive justice, but he does not teach that there is an eternally fixed relation between offenses and punishments, founded in exact and undeviating fitness, to be inflexibly executed. He declares many times that "distributive justice may be forever unsatisfied,"—in fact teaches that it *is* unsatisfied and *must* be in regard to all those who are forgiven. They are still guilty (in the sense of having *done* the wickedness) and still deserve all the punishment they ever did. Park's "justice" is always determined by the relations of the act. The penalty justly due to any act is determined by all the relations in which the act stands. If "distributive justice" be defined so that these general relations be ignored, Park denies such justice. There is always to him a view of the great universe of fact in determining what a given choice shall be, and so his most distributive of distributive justice has an element of "public" justice in it, or of regard to the public interests, the general whole of things.

Then, again, the "public justice" is not to be distinguished from benevolence. It is "*consequential* benevolence," but the epithet might be suppressed. It is simply "general love," a choice as to individual beings determined by the interests of all beings, a choice of "the good of being in general," as Edwards would have phrased it.

Park's view of the love of God thus emerges from the profundities of careful definition and dogmatic discussion, and becomes visible and capable of estimation. God's love is his sole moral attribute. Every other attribute, apparently diverse though it may be, is resolved ultimately into love, since it is a form of love's manifestation, and has no virtue apart from the love that it expresses and conveys. *The love of God is thus the determining principle of Park's theology.* We shall see, under the subject of the Will, that it meets certain restrictions in its application. Nevertheless the statement made remains true.

But Love, according to Park, is no mere ill-regulated emotion. It does not desire simply the sensuous gratification of God's creatures. It does not lead to making each individual "happy," considering each by himself alone. It regards principally that lofty happiness which consists in holiness. Hence it necessitates "hate," indeed, includes it in itself. If God loves holiness he must in the same act hate sin. Love of holiness and hate of sin are the same thing, the two sides of one choice, as the piece of paper has two inseparable sides. This is of the utmost importance in following out Park's theology. It is not like a low landscape, basking in a tropic sun, every hill crowned with monotonous vegetation. It is rather like the Sierras, rising here and there into sublime heights, crowned with the eternal purity of everlasting snows. Will Park, who teaches that God is love, interpret that love in a way to lead to Universalism? Not while he holds fast to the eternal "displacence" of God toward sin!

A brief quotation will illustrate the inclusiveness of Park's conception of love:—

"The comprehensive truth may be stated thus: Our benevolent Father does not administer his moral government under the influence of a limited attribute alone; not under the influence of mercy or grace or distributive justice without any regard to the general welfare; not under the influence of a choice of the general welfare without any regard to the demands of retributive justice or the pleadings of mercy or grace; but he administers his moral government under the influence of a general attribute looking at sin and at pardon in all their relations, and providing for the greatest and highest welfare of the universe. Under the influence of this general attribute our benevolent Father resists the plea of mercy and of grace when the safety of the universe requires him to resist it; he yields to the demand of distributive justice when the general good requires him to comply with it; his distributive justice holds the scales and his general justice holds the sword; the former urges its claims and the latter complies with them on the ground of their rectitude and on the condition of their necessity for the general welfare. The punishment which our Father inflicts is useful, but its usefulness rests on the ground of its being deserved; the justice of it comes first, the use-

fulness comes afterwards; the punishment cannot be useful unless it be just, and it must be useful if it is just, unless an atonement intervene. The fact that punishment is deserved rests on the ground that sin is intrinsically evil; the intrinsic evil of sin consists in the fact that it is a preference for the inferior above the superior good,—it is a love of self or the world rather than of Him who comprehends in his own being the welfare, not of the world only, but of the universe also; it is opposition to general benevolence, to general justice, to Him of whom our text affirms, 'God is love.'¹

THE BIBLE.

In the development of the system the point has now been reached where the Bible must receive a more careful consideration. It has been found to exist in the world, and to demand, as a fact of natural theology, constant attention. But Christianity is peculiarly the religion of the Bible. The doctrine of God and of his goodness does not constitute the whole of Christianity, nor even its peculiar and distinctive portion. There are other doctrines which are not attested by nature, as, for example, the doctrine of atonement. If they are true, they must derive their proof from the Bible, for they must depend on a revelation, such as the Bible professes to be. Hence before we come to them, we must discuss the authority of the Bible. Men need these doctrines; we must look to God for the revelation of his will in respect to them; and we come to look for such a revelation with the antecedent probability that so great a God, infinite in his power, and moved by love, will in some suitable way make revelation of himself. The proof of the Bible thus rests upon the proof of the benevolence of God. But we need further to examine the facts in order to ascertain whether God has carried out his benevolent purpose for men by giving them the particular book of revelation which we call the Bible.

The argument begins with a discussion of the genuineness of the biblical books. No reference is taken to the

¹ Memorial Collection of Sermons, p. 319 f.

Higher Criticism of the Old and New Testaments, which had not in Professor Park's active days reached such a point and attained such an acceptance as to call for treatment in a course of theological lectures. This portion of the system is therefore now quite antiquated. No one who denies what Park meant by genuineness now declares that the biblical books were "forged," as he laboriously sought to prove they were not.

The authenticity,—credibility, or truth,—of the Bible is next treated, and this receives a very broad and much more permanent handling. The proof is largely "internal," from the characteristics of the Bible, and these are shown to be adapted, first, to the *reason* of the race. Every faculty of the mind is duly addressed by the Bible, which is perfectly adapted to each,—to the imagination and taste, to the sensibilities, to the will (for every virtue is encouraged, every vice discouraged); and all the institutions of the Bible, such as church and sabbath, are founded in perfect wisdom. Again, the *success* of the Bible proves its truth, which cannot be explained if its authors are viewed as misguided enthusiasts or impostors. Finally, *Miracles* attested the truth of its doctrines.

The treatment of miracles does not, of course, meet the modern objection to them derived from an evolutionary revival and reinstatement of Strauss's mythical theory of their origin. That theory was supposed by Park to have been forever discredited. But the main philosophical considerations which connect the possibility of miracles with the personality of God, so that one cannot deny them without impairing that, are fully brought out; and, accordingly, discussion will always have to come back to the principles laid down by Park. He begins, as always, with careful definition. Four definitions are rehearsed. A miracle is (1) "that work which is produced immediately by such an interposition of God's bare volition as constitutes a phe-

nomenon which without that interposition could not have taken place." Or (2) "a miracle is a work wrought by the interposition of God producing what otherwise the laws of created nature must have prevented, or preventing what the laws of created nature must otherwise have produced." Or (3) it is "a work wrought by the immediate volition of God interposing and violating the laws of created nature in their established method of operation." Under this definition he discusses Hume, who, he says, committed a sophism in his definition, for "he defined a miracle as a 'violation of the laws of nature.' He objects to the existence of God, being a skeptic, and hence in a miracle has an event without a cause. But when we admit the being of God, a miracle is no violation of the laws of nature, for *it is a law of nature that matter obey its Creator.*" And (4) he defines: "A miracle is an event which occurs without a cause in created nature, without regularity in the times and places of its occurrence, and in manifest opposition to all those natural laws which have been observed in other events."

Thus *possible*, miracles need a sufficient *occasion* for their occurrence, which Park finds in the necessity of making a revelation to man. Miracles attest the divine commission of the bearers of this revelation, and were necessary to convince men of their commission. He recognizes also the fact that at this point of time miracles themselves need proof, and so proceeds to ask whether they were actually wrought in attestation of the Bible. By a characteristic turn of the argument, he first establishes their antecedent probability, and then, remarking that they *need very little evidence* to prove their reality, cites their unequivocal character and the repute, concurrence, and devotion of the witnesses, as sufficient proof of their actuality.

Park, therefore, did little, as he could then do little, to prepare a student for the more strenuous conflicts of our

own day, when even "orthodox" scholars have, for new reasons, returned to positions then old, and supposed to have been forever exploded. But in another direction he did much to prepare for these later discussions, when he defined the inspiration which the Bible possesses, and stripped the doctrine of much of the exaggeration and detail with which a Protestant scholasticism, in a false ambition for a perfect system, had encumbered it. Distinguishing between "revelation," as God's action in unfolding his truth to men, and "inspiration" as the method under which the Bible, as a collection of writings, has come into existence, he makes a number of valuable, and sometimes radical, modifications in the teachings of our historical Calvinism. His inspiration is mostly a divine "superintendency" so exercised over the writers, that the Bible is perfectly according to the divine will, and thus *perfect for the purpose for which it is intended*. A mere abstract and unrelated perfection is never claimed for it by Park. Inspiration, also, pertains to the writers of the Bible and not to their writings.

Before defining inspiration Park lays down certain preliminary cautions. We are *not* to say that the Bible is, or is not, correct in mere matters of science. Again, we are not to affirm or deny that the Bible is correct in mere history. Affirmation or denial here is aside from the dogmatic problem, because science and history are both aside from the purpose of the Bible, which is, in a word, to *save men*. Hence the definition of inspiration which he next proceeds to give is: "The inspiration of the Bible denotes such a divine influence upon the minds of the writers as caused them to teach in the best possible manner, *whatever they intended to teach*, and especially to *communicate religious truth without any error* either in religious doctrine or religious impression." What did they intend to teach? The phenomena in any case must show. Where

is our emphasis to be laid, and as to what may we be sure that they are right? Religious truth! With one stroke of definition Park has thus rendered unnecessary volumes of current discussion and irrelevant pages of denunciation of critics and scholars. He has done what Ritschl had in mind as his own chief service to theology; but, as we shall see, he did not later follow Ritschl into his many denials of elements of positive truth. In consistency with this main position he denies verbal inspiration, though contending for "plenary" in the sense that everywhere God's supervision is at work securing a perfect result,—a perfect guide to a holy life and to heaven.

Now, here again we see Park's greatness as an apologete and a systematician. For himself he used the Scriptures as most of the believers in verbal inspiration did and do. Moses Stuart had criticised every word and turn of phrase of the originals as if some important doctrine might hang thereon; and J. Henry Thayer was no less faithful and conscientious. Park stood between them and agreed with both. But he foresaw the struggles of later times. He prepared for them by the simple process of scrutinizing the traditional dogmatic positions very keenly for their content of exact *truth*. No verbiage, no "scaffolding," would he endure; nothing but the truth! And thus he left the way open for any sincere and convinced follower of his to study Kuenen and Wellhausen with perfect candor and fearlessness. Whatever they could *prove*, Park's pupils were ready for. But woe to them when they forgot religious experience, overstepped the bounds of proved fact, and began to *conjecture!* For Park ran no theory into the ground, and never committed the fallacy of imagining that because some one thing was true, nothing else could be! His own discoveries never seemed to him, as they were apt to seem even to Ritschl,—a great man, though not so great as Park,—to exhaust the whole

sphere of the divine truth. Science and history, said Park, do not belong to our theme: make of them what you will! For himself he would not "affirm" the scientific value of Genesis first. But he would not *then* permit any one to "deny" it. He contented himself, however, with drawing out the *religious* teaching of this chapter, which he embraced under seven heads: God *made* the universe, by *creation*, in progressive *order*, for *man*; man himself in the *image* of God, and for God's *worship*; and he added the institution of the *Sabbath*. *Keep that religious teaching intact*, and you have what the Bible has to give us that is of the greatest importance.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]