ART. V.—A REVIEW OF DR. HODGE'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE QUESTION OF INFANT BAPTISM AND INFANT SALVATION, IN THE CALVINISTIC SYSTEM.*

§1. OUTLINE AND GENERAL ESTIMATE OF DR. HODGE'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

THE work opens with an Introduction, which treats of Method; Theology; Rationalism; Mysticism; the Rule of Faith in the Roman Catholic and Protestant view.

The First Part embraces Theology proper; under which are treated: Origin of the idea of God; Theism; Antitheistic Theories; Knowledge of God; His Nature and Attributes; the Trinity; Divinity of Christ; the Holy Spirit; the Decree of God; Creation; Providence; Miracles; Angels.

The Second Part is occupied with Anthropology: Man, his Origin and Nature; Origin of the Soul; Unity of the Human Race; Original State of Man; Covenant of Works; the Fall; Sin; Free Agency.

The Third Part presents Soteriology: the Plan of Salvation; Covenant of Grace; the Person of Christ; His Mediatorial Work; Prophetic and Priestly Offices; Satisfaction; for Whom did Christ Die? Theories of the Atonement; Christ's Intercession; Kingly Office; Humiliation; Exaltation; Vocation; Regeneration; Faith; Justification; Sanctification; the Law, with a Particular Commentary on each Commandment; the Means of Grace; the Word of God; the Sacraments; Baptism; the Lord's Supper; Prayer.

The Fourth Part is Eschatology: The State of the Soul after Death; Resurrection; Second Advent; Concomitants of the Second Advent.

* Systematic Theology. By Charles Hodge, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co. 8vo. Vol. I., 1872, xiii., 648. Vol. II., xi., 732. Vol. III., 1873, viii., 580. Vol. IV. Index.

Of the general fullness and logical order of this arrangement there can be no question. The discussion of the Divinity of Christ as distinct from the Trinity might perhaps better have been given under Soteriology, so as not to separate the "Divinity of Christ" from the "Person of Christ." The most important defect in the plan is that it does not embrace a distinct and full treatment of the doctrine concerning the Church. The omission has been made for some reason which satisfies Dr. Hodge. We hope that it means that he proposes to give to the Church a monograph on this subject, one of the most vitally important and interesting doctrines at all times, but especially in our own day. We know of no man more competent than Dr. Hodge to rebuke, with the effectual weapons of fact and logic, the insane pretences of the rampant pseudo-ecclesiasticism of our time, and the yet insaner radicalism, which frightens many into the ecclesiasticism.

The first thing which strikes us in reading Dr. Hodge's book is the style. Whether we shall accept or reject what he maintains may sometimes involve a question, or a pause; but his simple, luminous mode of statement rarely leaves us in any embarrassment as to *what* it is on which we are to decide. The sentences are never involved. The language is a model of clearness. There is a plain solid sense, the result of a sound judgment thoroughly matured, which is delightful beyond expression in this day and land of fine writing. This, of course, will expose Dr. Hodge to the charge of shallowness, from those who think that nothing is deep but what is unintelligible, and that the art of good writing is the art of putting words to things in the proportion of Falstaff's sack to Falstaff's bread, and that the measure of words is like the measure of Falstaff in the girth.

Another great feature of Dr. Hodge's book is, its value to our common Christianity—nay, in a wide sense, to religion on that broader definition in which the believing Jew has a common interest with the Christian. To the gratitude of Jew and Christian, Dr. Hodge is entitled by the able vindication of Revelation against the assaults which would bring the faith of

Jew and Christian alike to the dust. To Roman Catholic and Protestant, Dr. Hodge comes with a defense of the common creeds of Christendom; to Calvinist and Lutheran, with the able argument on the distinctive elements of Protestantism and the precious truths reasserted by the original Churches of the Reformation. Even in its relative isolation as distinctively Calvinistic, Dr. Hodge's book is invaluable. It is the gauge of the type of Calvinism which is considered by its ablest living representatives as tenable; a Calvinism so gentle in its spirit toward other forms of evangelical Christianity, and so full of the disposition to mitigate its own harder points, as to furnish irenical elements of the most hopeful kind.

The general mildness, fairness, and clearness of the book are beyond dispute. It treats Polemics in the spirit of Irenics, for the most part, but with here and there a delightful little dash of merited sarcasm, a suspicion of irony, a playful contempt for small presumption, and a quiet smile at the absurd, which humanize the argument, and, with those touches which make the whole world kin, bring the author nearer to the reader. Nor are there wanting earnest and eloquent passages, which deal with sin in a manner in keeping with its exceeding sinfulness, and with conscious perversions after their evil deserts. There is no amiable inanity in the book. It is not done in water-colors, as some people would think it must be, because it is not executed with a red-hot poker on an oak-board. Yet its prevailing character is mild, quiet, firm, judicial. If it is often pleading, it is still more frequently the decision of a judge, who sums up evidence, interprets the law, and pronounces the sentence.

The evidences of enormous, yet reflective, reading everywhere present themselves, reading of the most varied kind, among the best books and the worst books. There is a gathering of honey for stores, and of poisons for the study of antidotes. The range stretches over the ages, takes in largely the German theology, and reaches apparently almost to the days in which the volumes have come from the press. The result of this anxiety to bring things down to the hour has neces-

sarily been that some of the latest reading has been hasty and has involved Dr. Hodge in mistakes. But the Doctor's greatest weakness, in this immensity of reading, is where it might least have been suspected—it is in Calvinistic theology. He seems to have neglected a part of the Calvinistic theologians of no inconsiderable number and bulk. On his own confession, so far as his memory can recall, he has failed to have seen a single one of a very large and influential portion of those divines, so large in fact that for some two centuries it is hard to find one who does not belong to it. But we account for this on the principles of a latent elective affinity. Like seeks only its like and holds it. There rise up in history the grim and grisly features of those old divines who liked election but who loved reprobation; who conceived of the human race as created chiefly as fuel for Tophet,—divines who would have thought nothing of the perdition of a universe or two, and, if necessary, of throwing themselves in, if their logic proved that it was all for God's greater glory—those inexorable Jonahs on whom a wilderness of gourds would have been lost in the attempt to reconcile them to the sparing of Nineveh. If Dr. Hodge long ago encountered these divines, he quietly turned away into his own brighter path, with other visions of the divine glory. He did not plunge into the Sahara, in the possibility of finding an oasis. Penetrated, as all his works show, with the completest recognition which is possible to Calvinism, that God is love, Calvinism itself is hardly in sharper contrast with Lutheranism than, within Calvinism, Dr. Hodge himself is with Gomarus and his pitiless school. The only apology which can be made for that school is that which they constantly make for themselves—that the logic of the system is with them, and that they are with the logic of the system. They did not create the horrors, they only told of them.

The general tone of the book is profoundly devout. Though Dr. Hodge has moved largely and freely in the living world, his most marked affinities are yet with the old. He saith "the old is better." He has not put enough of the new wine into the old bottles to rend them—except perhaps in a spot or

two. In spite of recent reading, and of the space devoted to the callow heresies of the hour, the conception and organism of the book is prevailingly scholastic, of the old Protestant type. It is old-fashioned theology in the main; and, like the best old-fashioned theology, it has the heart of living piety beating through it. It is not satisfied with teaching *about* theology: it teaches theology, it is theology—a true "*theologia regenitorum*." Its solid judgment and learning will mark it to scholars as one of the classics of Calvinistic Dogmatics, the ablest work in its specific department in English literature. But it is more than this, better than this. The graces of Christian life are not repressed in it, as they have often been in the arid formulating of systems. Moliere's Mock Doctor claimed no more than that the medical profession had changed the place of the heart from the left side to the right; some of the doctors in theology have left the heart out altogether. But in Dr. Hodge's Body of Divinity there is a heart whose beat is that of the fullest health—and you can touch the system nowhere without feeling a pulse. It is a book for the affections. No man could obtrude himself less in his books than Dr. Hodge does; yet all the more for this very reason do we see the man himself in his books. His life has been shaped upon the advice of old Sir John Davies:

> "Study the best and highest things that are;
> But of thyself, an humble thought retain."

Dr. Hodge's system furnishes a general landmark for Christian thinking in one of its most influential shapes; it also furnishes a revelation of the spirit of Christian science, a picture of the Christian scholar, a miniature of the Christian life. Dr. Hodge constitutes in himself a distinct evidence of Christianity, and alike in what he writes and what he is, vindicates the supremacy of Protestant culture.

§2. INFANTS, INFANT BAPTISM, AND INFANT SALVATION IN THE CALVINISTIC SYSTEM.

It is a marked feature in Dr. Hodge's book that it does unusual justice to the relative importance of Lutheran theology.

There are but two developed systems in the world that claim with any show of probability to be purely Biblical. These systems are the Lutheran and the Calvinistic. They possess a common basis in their recognition of the same rule of faith; their profession of the Old Catholic faith as set forth in the three General Creeds; in their acknowledgment of the doctrine of justification by faith and of its great associated doctrines; and they have vast interests, great stakes, mighty bonds of sympathy in common. No two bodies of Christians have more reason for thoroughly understanding each other than Calvinists and Lutherans have, and no two parts of Christendom are closer together in some vital respects than consistent Calvinism and consistent Lutheranism. It is well worth their while to compare views.

But Dr. Hodge is not only full in his notices of Lutheran theology—he is also fair. Mistakes he has made, and very important ones; but designed misrepresentations he has never made. Next to having Dr. Hodge on one's side is the pleasure of having him as an antagonist; for where conscientious men must discuss a subject, who can express the comfort of honorable, magnanimous dealing on both sides—the feeling that in battling with each other they are also battling for each other, in that grand warfare whose final issue will be what all good men desire, the establishment of truth?

§ 3. THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION AND ELECT INFANTS.

On various points Dr. Hodge argues against the Lutheran doctrine, or what he believes to be such. One of these points is Baptism. On the "necessity" of Baptism, Dr. Hodge thinks the Lutheran divines have "softened down." On this point he is mistaken. Our divines, beginning with Luther and Melanchthon, have held, and hold to this hour, that Baptism is ordinarily, but not absolutely, necessary. (See Conservative Reformation, pp. 427, seq., 557, seq.) In a note (Vol. III. 605), Dr. Hodge says: "We are sorry to see that Dr. Krauth labors to prove that the Westminster Confession teaches that only a certain part, or some of those, who die in infancy are saved; this he does by putting his own construction on the language of that Confession. We can only say that we never saw a Calvinistic theologian who held that doctrine. We are not learned enough to venture the assertion that no Calvinist ever held it; but if all Calvinists are responsible for what every Calvinist has ever said, and all Lutherans are responsible for everything Luther or Lutherans have ever said, then Dr. Krauth, as well as ourselves, will have a heavy burden to carry."

We say in all sincerity that we should prefer that Dr. Hodge should be right on the question here involved. We wish that the Westminster Confession could be harmonized with the view, that all who die in infancy are certainly saved. We wish we could be brought even fairly to doubt that its teachings are irreconcilable with such a view. We should be glad to have it shown that it is merely our mistaken construction of the Confession which is at fault, and that the meaning of its words, on the principles of correct interpretation, is not what we have supposed. But we have seen what Dr. Hodge "never saw." We have seen more than one Calvinistic theologian who does hold that doctrine. We humbly and utterly deprecate the position in which Dr. Hodge would seem to insist on putting us, if we venture to assert that some Calvinists do hold it, as if it were between him and us a question of sufficient learning, as if the question were, do we know more about Calvinistic theology than Dr. Hodge does? Dr. Hodge has gone over the world of theological literature as few men have done. We acknowledge and reverence in him one of the greatest and ripest scholars of our age; but Apelles acknowledges that a cobbler may be authority on a sandal. And what we shall offer in this effort to show that we are not mistaken in our judgment of Calvinistic teaching, shall be offered with the desire not fairly to offend against the canon: "*Ne sutor ultra.*"

§4. HOW ARE CONFESSIONS TO BE INTERPRETED?

We have certainly said nothing to justify the imputation that we think that every Calvinist is responsible for what every

other Calvinist says. The caveat of Dr. Hodge must have reference to what he supposes we would say in defending our position—to wit, that it is supported by the opinion of Calvinistic theologians whom we may have seen, though he has not. But we do not intend to take any line of defense open to the very just objection which Dr. Hodge makes. Our line of defense is this: The Confession has one sense only; this sense is to be fixed by the acknowledged principles of interpretation; the natural sense of the words, as they impress the minds of readers, is, *cæteris paribus*, to be accepted in preference to any other; in case of dispute as to their meaning, the different parts of the Confession are to be compared with reference to the light they shed on each other; if opinions still differ as to the sense, the usage of the authors of the Confession, of the great divines of the Church, and of their successors, the official and sworn teachers and defenders of its faith, are to be appealed to, to show how the words were understood by those who used them, by those who subscribed them, and by the Church in general—and what is the sense most in harmony with the logical necessities and completeness of the system, as its defenders themselves have understood them. A sense fixed by these processes carries with it a moral probability which throws the whole burden of proof on those who deny this sense; they must admit this sense, or demonstrate its incorrectness. We acknowledge that a Church is to be judged by its standards, and not by its divines, as they add to, take from, or change the standards. The Confessions of Churches ought to be guardians of its liberties as well as protectors of its purity. But we cannot judge a Church by its standards unless we have right modes of interpreting the standards. The standards can neither conserve the freedom nor the purity of the Church unless we can settle their true sense, over against the severity which puts into them what they do not mean, and the laxity which takes out of them what they do mean.

Such indeed is the moral force of the utterances of the authors and representative men of Church Confessions, that

it is sometimes urged as more than counterbalancing what would be, apart from it, a natural sense of the Confession. On this principle the great Calvinistic Synod of Dort,* after conceding that "the words of the third Article of the Arminians, as they outwardly sound and lie before us, seem to be good and orthodox," goes on to say: "but inasmuch as—thus Chrysostom long ago said—the heresy is wont to be in the *meaning* of the word, the meaning of these words is to be determined, and that from the writings and books of the Remonstrants themselves." With its proper restriction this principle holds good. A confession that punishments are "*eternal*," if those who make it are avowed Universalists, has its sense fixed by that fact. A confession that Christ is "*divine*" means little if Socinians make it. There is hardly a page of Dr. Hodge's three volumes which does not assume the correctness of this principle, alike in determining the views held by other Churches, and in establishing his own. It is on the basis of the moral probability of concurrent testimony that he constantly and properly assumes that he has the ability to present a correct interpretation of the Calvinistic system. Throughout he takes the very means, and the only means, we propose to employ, in settling in disputed cases the precise meaning of the Confession of his own Church, and of other Churches. We propose no test for Calvinism which we are not willing to apply to Lutheranism. If we put a sense on our Confession which Dr. Hodge can prove to be in conflict with the views held at the time of its framing by its authors, and out of harmony with the other parts of the system, if we shall define words in it in a sense in which he can show its authors did not use them, and in which they were not received by the line of witnesses who are acknowledged to have been loyal to the faith of the Church, then shall we justify Dr. Hodge in asserting that we have reached that sense by putting our own construction on its language. But, on the other hand, if we shall fix, on these principles, a certain sense

* Actor. Part 2, dog. ad Artic. III., p. 261. Ed. Dort.

on the familiar terms of Calvinistic Confessions and systems, we shall feel that Dr. Hodge in denying that sense is thrown completely on the defensive, and is bound to show that his denial does not rest on his own construction, a construction reached without the natural aids which history brings to grammar in the interpretation of language.

We rejoice that for himself Dr. Hodge so unequivocally takes ground against the whole dark theory of infant damnation. If he be right in asserting that it never follows from the Calvinistic system, we are glad that the system itself is relieved from the blot; if he be mistaken in this assertion, we rejoice still that the Calvinism of the present is yielding; we rejoice the more because we believe that in yielding this, the old historically defined system yields itself; for we believe, and propose to show, that logical Calvinism is involved in a hopeless entanglement in the whole matter of infant salvation and infant Baptism.

§ 5. THE SALVATION OF INFANTS DEPENDENT ON ABSOLUTE PERSONAL ELECTION.

The Calvinistic system places the salvation of infants on the ground of a divine election of individuals.

HEIDEGGER.*—"To those (the elect), who die in infancy, Baptism seals the grace of regeneration. . . It cannot be doubted, that the souls of *elect infants* dying in infancy, are inserted by the Spirit, into Christ, either before Baptism or at least in Baptism. . . The Baptism of *elect infants*, is not an empty figure. . . The *elect infants* receive the seal."

WITSIUS.†—"Christ hath not made satisfaction for any sin which He has not taken on Himself. He has taken no sins on Himself except those of the elect. The remission of original sin by the blood of Christ has been obtained for none except for him who *is elect*." "To the Orthodox, disputing of the efficacy of Baptism, the main, if not the sole inquiry, is, what does it confer on *elect infants, who alone*, according to the strictness of the Divine judgment, *have a right to it* (*quibus solis ad eum jus est*)?" "By Baptism the good things of the covenant are signed and sealed to *elect infants* as things belonging to them."

* Corpus Theologiæ: II. 449.

† Of the Efficacy of Baptism in Infants. Mis. Sacr., II. 621.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION.*—"The grace promised" (in Baptism) is conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as *that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will.*"

§ 6. INFANTS ELECT AND REPROBATE.

For the Calvinistic system distinctly recognizes "*elect infants*," and thus always virtually, and often in terms, the existence of "*reprobate* infants."

CALVIN.†—"If *those*, therefore, *to whom the Lord hath vouchsafed His election*, having received the sign of regeneration, *depart this life before they grow up*, He reneweth *them* by the power of His Spirit."

MUSCULUS ‡—"Since, therefore, this discrimination of *elect* and *reprobate*, in *new-born infants* (*recens natis infantibus*), is hidden from our judgment, it is not fitting that we should inquire into it, lest by ignorance we reject vessels of grace."

MARTYR.§—"What is to be judged of the soul of a child so killed, having as yet not received the sacrament (of circumcision)? I answer that we, either as touching his salvation or condemnation, can affirm nothing on either side. For if he pertained to the number of the elect so that he was predestinate to eternal life, there is no cause but that he may be saved. But if he were a vessel to *that end made* of God, *to show forth in him His wrath*, and so *to be condemned*, what can we complain of the severity of God, especially seeing we are all born the children of wrath and of condemnation?"

ALSTED John Henry (1588-1638) says of Baptism.—"The children of unbelievers are not to be baptized—the children, both of whose parents are believers or one of whom is a believer, are to be baptized—for the infants of believers are in the covenant. If the covenant, which is the greater thing, belongs to them, much more does the seal, which is the less. The faith of parents benefits infants."‖ "The mode of federation, with respect to infants (we mean the infants of believers, who die before they reach the years of discretion) is almost hidden to us. Yet this is certain, that in the foundation of the covenant of grace, they are justified, and blessed, and hence are endowed with true faith. *Elect* infants are falsely called unbelievers, for though elect infants who die in infancy, for of these we speak, be destitute of what is called actual faith, they are not on that account destitute of all faith. For as they have the Holy Ghost, it is impossible that there should be no operation of the Holy Ghost in them; though it be secret and unknown to us.

* XXVIII. VI. † Institutes, IV., XVI., 21. ‡ Loci Communes, 336.

§ Common Places, IV. 110. ‖ Theologia, Scholastica Didactica, Hanoviæ. 1618, 4to. pp. 815, 816. The copy we use is in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

Nor can they be called unbelievers. For as Christ is received by faith only, and Christ is given to elect infants, as having union and communion with Him; we cannot deny that they have faith. Faith in principle and seed, and virtually, is to be attributed to elect infants." *

The SWISS THEOLOGIANS at Dort † say: "That there is an *election and reprobation of infants, no less than of adults*, we cannot deny, in the face of *God* who loves, * and *hates, unborn children* (*nondum natos amat, et odit*)."

CHAMIER.‡—"In the case of these (*infants*) Paul has most expressly established by testimonies of Scripture, that there is not only a *predestination* unto *salvation*, but also a *reprobation*. And indeed it must *either* be asserted *that no infants* are destined to punishment, *or* it must be confessed that some are destined without respect to co-operation or repugnance. Since the *former is absurd*, the second is to be held as true." "There are two classes of mankind who perish, some utterly deserted in natural corruption, and ignorance of Divine Truth, as the *most part of infants* outside the Church." §

MARK FREDERIC WENDELIN (1584—1652) was one of the greatest of the German Reformed dogmaticians, and polemics of the Seventeenth Century. His Theologia Christiana (the smaller work—the larger one was posthumous 1656) first appeared 1634, and was reviewed by John Gerhard, to whom Wendelin refers in his Theological Exercitations, 1652. In this very elaborate defence of Calvinism, he shows at large, that "Baptism does not change infants spiritually," "that none are to be admitted to Baptism, but those who are in God's covenant," and the "arguments are answered by which Lutherans prove that all infants are regenerated in the Act of Baptism.‖ "That Baptism, as a laver of regeneration, is applied for the remission of sins, all the Reformed Churches teach. But it is one thing to say, that infants are baptized for the remission of sins, it is another thing to say, that they are baptized, that they may be regenerated." ¶ Gerhard had urged that if "the hypothesis of the absolute decree of reprobation stands, this affirmation can be made, not of all infants, but of the *elect* only, as in truth, the Calvinistic doctors in various passages, actually explain it." Wendelin with perfect frankness replies: "There is no need here of inferences or of citations, to convince me. Of my own accord, and freely and expressly I confess, with *Ursinus* and our other teachers, that not all who are

* Do. 785. † Acta Synod. Dordr. Judic. 49. ‡ Panstrat. Cathol. III., viii., 8, 11, 14, 117. § Panstrat. Catho'. VII., i., 18, 99. ‖ Exercitationes Theologicæ, Casselis. 1652, 4to. See the very copious Index: Baptismus. ¶ Exercitatio. xxxvii. § 18.

baptized, whether adults or *infants*, become participants of the grace of Christ, for the election of God is most free: it is therefore a *prerogative of the elect alone*, which Baptism seals."*

"With one mouth, all the Reformed Churches teach that all the infants of Christians, draw from their nativity original sin, and through it are obnoxious to eternal death." "*All infants* of Christians, even before Baptism are holy, with a federal and external holiness, on account of which they ought to be reputed a part of the visible Church and people of God, and as federates be admitted to the seal of the covenant. *Some infants* of Christians, even before Baptism, nay even in their mothers' womb, not indeed by nature, but by grace, are holy with an internal sanctity, and *these infants are believers and regenerate. Charity presumes* this sanctity in regard to each one, no less before Baptism, than after it." "The internal sanctity is not necessarily conjoined with the federal, but in *many infants* and adults is separated from it. This we learn from the event; for those who were once sanctified never wholly lose their sanctity."† "The case of infants born of those not federate is different, to whom that grace is not promised. Hence they are not federate, and, still less regenerated by the Spirit."‡ "In general it is very truly said, of a Christian is born, not a heathen but a Christian, as a Jew is born of a Jew, a citizen of a citizen."§ "The Word of God has no efficacy unless it be understood. The Spirit of God operates without the word, not only on infants born, but on infants unborn."‖

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION X. iii.—"Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated."

§ 7. INFANTS WORTHY OF PERDITION.

For Calvinism holds that all infants are bound over to God's wrath and made subject to eternal misery; that is, that God might justly condemn forever every infant.

HEIDEGGER: ¶ (1633—1698).—For original sin the penalty is eternal; it is the penalty both of loss and of sense, the sense both of the worm, and of the fire, though in some, as for example *in infants* it is milder, in others it is severer."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, XI., vi.—"*Every sin* both *original* and actual, * * * doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal, and *eternal*."**

§ 8. ACTUAL PERDITION OF INFANTS ACCORDING TO CALVINISM.

Holding that all infants deserve damnation, that the elec-

* Exercitatio. xxxvii. 19. † Do. I. ‡ Do. 15. § Do. 3. ‖ Do. 8. ¶ Do. 10.
** Corpus Theologiæ, Tigur, 1700. Fol. I. 361.

tion of God alone can save them from it, and that this election does not extend to all infants, Calvinism of necessity teaches that some infants perish.

CALVIN.*—"As to infants they seem to perish not by their own fault but by the fault of another; but there is a double solution. Though sin does not yet appear in them, yet it is latent; for they bear corruption shut up in the soul, so that before God they are damnable."

"That infants who are to be saved (as certainly out of that age *some* are saved) must be before regenerated by the Lord is clear." †

Holding that infants must be regenerated in order to be saved, Calvinism teaches that some infants die *unregenerated*, and are lost.

MARTYR.‡—"Augustine adjudgeth young infants to hell fire, if they die *not regenerated*. And the Holy Scriptures do seem to favor his part; for in the last *judgment, there shall* be but only a double sentence pronounced. There is no third place appointed between the saved and condemned * * * We will say, therefore, with Augustine, and with the Holy Scripture, that they *must be punished*."

SPANHEIM, the elder, in arguing against the universality of the Divine will, that men should be saved, says: "Either God wills to have mercy unto the salvation of the Gentiles outside of the covenant, whether deprived of *life in the cradle*, in the *earliest infancy*, or attaining to some age, or He does not If He does not, the universality of His pity goes to the ground. If He does, it follows that to numberless ones to whom *not a word concerning Christ* and the Gospel was ever made known, *there exists a way to salvation, outside of Christ and the covenant of God*." "The universal pity overthrows the decree of election and reprobation." §

MOLINAEUS.‖—"Of the infants of unbelievers." "We dare not promise salvation to any (infant) remaining outside Christ's covenant. They are indeed by nature 'children of wrath' (Eph. ii. 3), and 'strangers from the covenant of promise,' (Verse 12). They are pronounced (1 Corinth. vii. 14) 'unclean,' while that they are contrasted with the 'holy.' From which curse, inasmuch as no one is freed except through Christ, I *do not find that the benefit of Christ* pertains to them."

COCCEIUS.¶—"Elect Infants" * * "are not conceived and born as are the children of the Gentiles, concerning whom the *presumption is certain*, that they, with their mother's milk, drink in godlessness unto destruction."

* Ezekiel XVIII., Opera iv. 167. † Institut. iv. xvi. 17. ‡ Common Place, I., 234. § Exercitat. de Grat., universali, 4. ‖ Thesaurus Disputat. Theolog. in Sedan. Acad. Genev. 1661. I. 212. ¶ Cateches. Palat. Quæs. LXXIV.

DR. TWISS, *Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly.*—WILLIAM TWISS (1575—1646) was renowned for his learning, his piety, and his rigid Calvinism. He was a strong Supralapsarian. He nobly represents the firmness and internal consistency of the true old Calvinist. He was worthy the honor conferred on him by both Houses of Parliament, in electing him Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. "He was universally allowed to be the ablest opponent of Arminianism in that age." His greatest work is his Vindiciæ Gratiæ,* his Vindication of the Grace, Power and Providence of God. It was written in reply to the Criticism of Arminius (1560—1609) on Perkins, (1558—1602).

Twiss says: "*Many infants depart from this life in original sin, and* consequently are condemned to eternal death, on account of original sin alone: therefore from the sole transgression of Adam condemnation to eternal death has *followed upon many infants*." †

(WESTMINSTER CONFESSION: X., iii., iv.): "*Elect infants* * * are saved. * * So too are all other elect persons. Others not elected * * cannot be saved."

The doctrine of genuine Calvinism then is that there are reprobate infants who are left to the total penalty which original *sin* brings and merits.

What that is, the Larger Catechism defines (Q. 27): "The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so that we are by nature children of wrath, bound slaves to Satan, and justly liable to *all* punishments in this world and that which is to come." The punishments of sin in the world to come "are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell-fire forever." (Q. 29). In this state of sin and misery God *leaves* all men, except his elect. (Q. 30). "*Every sin*, both *original* and actual, * * * doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with ALL the miseries, spiritual, temporal, and ETERNAL." (Westminster Confess. VI., 6). It is from this the "elect infants" are delivered, it is to this the "reprobate infants" are abandoned.

* The first Edition was published 1632, Folio. The one from which we quote is the Second. Amsterdam, 1632. 4to. It is in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania. † Vindiciæ, I. 48.

were at first compelled to admit, and has led them not only to reject the doctrine of infant damnation, but has made them unwilling to believe that it was ever implied in their Confession, and maintained by their divines. Nor have there been wanting Calvinistic divines of the highest order, who have abandoned entirely this part of the Calvinistic doctrine, and have accepted in substance the Lutheran view. Such were Le Blanc, and Jurieu.* Nor can we wonder at this. The Calvinistic system furnishes no ground of *positive assurance* that any infant whatever dying in infancy is saved. As Lutherans, we have a clear faith resting on a specific covenant in the case of a baptized child, and a well grounded hope resting on an all-embracing mercy in the case of an unbaptized child.

To Calvinism the baptism authenticates nothing. What it is in any case, even as a sign, is a secret bound up with another secret. The most that Calvinism can do in the most hopeful case is to cherish a *presumption* in charity, that the child's parents may be elect, and a presumption on that presumption that the child may be elect, and therefore saved—while in the darkest case the presumption is that the class of children it embraces is lost. The same element in Calvinism, which on the basis of a *secret* council forbids it to affirm of any one particular child that that child is lost, forbids it equally to affirm of any one particular child that that child is certainly lost: and the sort of presumption on which Calvinism argues that a few children *may* be saved, is overwhelming in fixing the conclusion that the great masses of children are lost.

§ 11. HEREDITARY RIGHTS OF INFANTS.

Calvinism holds that the rights of infants in the Church are *hereditary* rights, bound up with their natural descent.

CALVIN.†—"Unless God transmit His grace from the fathers to the sons, to receive new-born infants into the Church, would be a mere profanation of Baptism." "The children of *believers*, who are born in the Church, we say are of the household of the kingdom of God. * * Inasmuch as God hath adopted the children of believers, before they were born, we draw the inference that they are not to be defrauded of the outward sign."*

ZANCHIUS.†—"All are to be baptized who, on account of the piety of the parents are believed to belong to the covenant."

WITSIUS.‡—"It is a thing confessed by all the orthodox (the Calvinists), that, although it be not safe curiously to search into the secrets of the divine counsels, and to determine many things concerning the lot of infants, dying in infancy; yet that the *prerogative* is great, of those infants, whose *parents* are in the *saving communion* of God's covenant."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, xxvii.: "The visible Church . . . . . consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, *together with their children.*" So Larger Catechism, Q. 62.

§ 12. HEREDITARY EXEMPTION FROM THE COMMON LOT.

Hence in the Calvinistic system the children of believers seem to be exempt from the common lot in some sense.

CALVIN.§—The propagation of sin and damnation in the seed of Adam is universal; all, therefore, not one excepted, are included within this curse, whether they spring from believers or from the godless. . . The condition of nature is therefore equal in all, so that they are subject alike to sin and eternal death. That the Apostle here attributes a *special* privilege to the children of believers, flows from the blessing of the covenant, by the supervention of which the curse of nature is removed. The *children of believers* are exempted from the *common lot of the human* race, as they are separated unto the Lord." "Those that were without (the church), were not to be admitted to baptism till they had made a profession of faith. But the *infant children of believers*, as they were adopted from the womb, and by right of the promise, pertained to the body of the Church, were baptized."

§ 13. JUDAIZING VIEW.

The logical Calvinism runs out in fact into a *Judaizing* construction of the covenant, and of the relation of infants to it.

PAREUS.‖—"The children of Christians are born Christians, as the children of Jews were born Jews." "They are born in the covenant and are citizens of the Church." "The infants of Christians are citizens of the Church, are born in the covenant, with federal grace, and saints of saints: as citizens are born of citizens, the free are born of the free, slaves are born of slaves."¶

* Witsius, Miscell. Sacr. II. Exc. XIX. LXII. LXIV. † II. Defens. de Sacrament. Opera VIII. 683.

* On Acts X. 47. † Opera, VIII. 516. ‡ De Efficac. Bapt. in Infantib. Miscell. Sacr. II. 615. § 1 Corinth. vii. 14. Hebrews vi. 2. ‖ Irenicon, 262. ¶ Comm. in Rom. XI. 1143.

GURTLER.*—"Christian infants are federates of God, partakers of the good things promised in the covenant, citizens of the kingdom of heaven, defended by angels, and heirs of eternal life, *therefore* not to be deprived of the sign of the covenant."

All this they are (if elect) born to in their natural birth of believers, and having all this already, the sign is to be given them.

§ 14. CUTTING OFF OF INFANTS FROM THE COVENANT.

The Calvinistic system holds that the parental neglect to have a child baptized cuts off the child from the covenant, as in the Jewish nation.

CALVIN.†—"Inasmuch as it is not in man's good pleasure to sunder what God has joined together: no one can spurn or neglect the sign, without casting away the Word itself, and depriving himself of the blessing therein offered. Whosoever, Baptism neglected, pretends that he is content with the bare promise, treads under foot, as far as in him lies, the blood of Christ, or at least *permits it not to flow to his children*, who are to be washed. Therefore *the contempt* of the sign is followed by the just penalty, *the privation of grace*, inasmuch as by the godless divorce, or rather the tearing asunder of the sign and of the Word, the covenant of God is violated."

COCCEIUS.‡—"If they be not baptized, there would be an *abnegation of the covenant of God*, as if believers had not a promise concerning their children, but as if they were in the same lot in which the children of unbelievers are."

§ 15. ELECT PARENTS AND ELECT INFANTS.

The *presumption* that infants are *elect* is based upon the *presumption* that the parents are *elect*. It is not enough that the parents are members of the visible Church, nor that before men they sustain a good character for piety—they must be elect.

GOMARUS.§—"We piously believe that the *infants* of *those who are in God's covenant through Christ, and true believers*, are also elect."

In the various passages we have cited, it is always the presumption that the parents are elect and therefore believers; that is the basis of the presumption that their children are elect. The Church membership of the parent, in itself has no bearing on the election of the child, except that when people

* Instit. Theolog. 844. † On Genes. XVII. 14. Opera, Amstelod. 1671, p. 91. ‡ Catechesis. Rel. Christ. Q. LXIV. § Acta Synod, Dord. III. 24.

profess religion, we charitably presume they have it, and presuming that they are elect, we presume that their children may be elect.

§ 16. A PIOUS FICTION.

But this presumption is but a presumption in any case. In the best case the faith of elect parents that their children are certainly sanctified, rests after all on a *pious fiction*. No parent can, according to logical Calvinism, have any real assurance in regard to any particular child, that it is elect, sanctified, and in the covenant.

BEZA, at the Colloquy at MONTBELIARD:* "The Holy Spirit exercises His power in the elect alone. . . the others who are condemned, and not elect, being left. . . The adoption is *offered* in circumcision, to all who are circumcised; but the *elect* alone receive it, whose eyes God has opened, that they may see and be saved. The rest, to whom God hath not vouchsafed this grace, are left to His righteous judgment: and yet God remains true. The same takes place in Baptism, which *many thousand infants receive*, who yet are never regenerated, but *perish forever*."

Beza's words, as they were generally understood, were so often quoted against the Calvinistic system, that Christian Becmann (under the assumed name of Masson) insists that they have been perverted, and that Beza meant that "many thousands of baptized children become godless and are lost, after they reach the age of adults." Masson could hardly have read the Acts of the Colloquy, or he would have seen that in Andreæ's reply to Beza, are these words: "It is a very dreadful thing to hear you say that many thousand infants are baptized, who are never regenerated, but perish forever; nor do I think there is a single person in this body of hearers who will agree with you in this." To this Beza replied not a word. Andreæ further said: "It is a bad thing on your part that you leave pious parents in perpetual doubt whether their children have been adopted as sons of God through the Baptism they have received. For according to your answers. . . it cannot and ought not to be certainly pronounced that a baptized infant is adopted as God's child or regenerated, but that it should only be *thought probable* that they will be endowed with the fruit of adoption, God's secret judgment being left to Himself."

To this Beza replied: "Each of us can judge and pronounce concerning ourselves, whether we be regenerate or not; but a judgment concerning others may be doubtful and false."

* Acta Colloq. Montis Belligartensis. Anno C. 1586. Tubingæ, 1594. p. 479. Do-aux dem Latein verteutscht: Tubingen, 1587, p. 837.

MOMMA,* who boasts that it was his "supremest solicitude not to depart a nail's breadth from the faith and Confession of the Reformed Church," is more candid than Masson, and stamps Andreæ with the epithet "crude," for his counter judgment to Beza.

BEZA.†—"If it be objected that not *all born* of faithful parents are *elect*, and consequently not all sanctified, since God did not elect all the children of Abraham and Isaac, we are not without an answer. *For though we do not in the least deny that these things are so;* yet we say this secret judgment is to be left to God, and *in general* (unless there be something in the way, from which the opposite can be gathered), we presume from the formula of promise, that they who are born of faithful parents, or of one faithful parent, are sanctified."

ZANCHIUS:‡ "We believe that *elect infants*, when they are baptized, are not baptized with water alone, but are endowed also with the Spirit of Regeneration."

BUCAN.§—"Children (born of believing parents, or of one believing parent,) the Apostle calls 'holy' (1 Cor. vii. 14): that is pure and separated to the Lord. * Nor is it in the way of this, *that not all born of faithful parents are elect*, for it is not for us to search into the secret judgments of God; but we with good reason suppose all born of Christians *probably* elect."

GUERTLER.‖—"Many sprinkled with water both *infants* and adults, do not obtain salvation, beyond doubt because they do not receive *Baptism entire*, but only its first and most common part."

WITSIUS.¶—"Baptism does not signify nor seal, still less does it confer on *all* infants of those who are in the covenant, any common justification, regeneration and sanctification. * * or remission of original sin, either a revocable or irrevocable remission. But all efficacy of Baptism, which involves a state of salvation, even in respect of *their age*, is confined to *elect infants* alone (*solis electis infantibus proprium*)."

LEYDECKER.**—"The faith demanded of parents in the formula of Baptism is *indefinite:* This, to wit that godly persons' infants are *sanctified* in Christ. And that faith is true, although there should be here and there *an exception*. . . That divine promise has a *common* truth, though God *reserve to Himself*, according to His own power and liberty, *the exclusion of some infants*. Faith . . performs its office when it lays hold of the promise *as it is given*, and reverently leaves to God *liberty of application*. The believer is bound . . to acquiesce in the promise given . . and to trust in it, or, in the judgment of charity to hope

* De Varia Conditione, sub Oeconom., etc. Basileæ 1718, II. 207. † De Spirit. Sac. IV. 29. ‡ Opera, VII. 48. § Institut. Theolog. Loc. XLVII. 29. ‖ Institut. Theolog. Amstelod. 1694. Ch. XXXIII. 173. ¶ De Effic. Baptism, Misc. Sac. II. 622. ** De Veritat. Fid. Ref. siv. Comm. in Catech. Palat. Ultraj. 1694, p. 327.

well concerning this infant which is to be baptized—nay, to believe that *this* infant belongs to Christ, *unless* God, by a singular decision, *wills its* exclusion. The faith demanded of parents is not vain. . . though *here and there one* (of the infants) *does not belong to the election*. . . . although there is not an internal baptizing of exactly all infants."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION X. M. IV. "*Elect* infants dying in infancy are regenerated. So, also, are *all other elect* persons. Others not elected . . . cannot be saved."

§ 17. RESERVE.

Hence logical Calvinism speaks with *reserve* even of the cases of infants, which are most hopeful. "If the infants of *believers* die in infancy before the years of discretion, we have good *hopes* concerning them," say the Swiss theologians at Dort.* "By the law of *charity*," says Pareus,† and so through the whole. Millions of the children of pagans and of other reprobates are certainly lost, and some, *if* their parents be elect, *may* be saved. We reach again the point to which we came before. Calvinism has no ground on which it can affirm positively and unerringly, on *its own premises*, that any one particular child dying in infancy is certainly saved. In place of a distinct Christian assurance based on a positive covenant, it has assumption based on assumption, presumption built on presumption, hopes resting on hopes, Charity confessing that ignorance of a terrible secret is its mother. The worst position in which a brighter faith can suppose a child to be, is the best which Calvinism can assign it.

§ 18. BAPTISM AND ANABAPTISM.

CALVINISM rests the validity of Baptism not on what it brings, but on what it finds:

LATTER CONFESSION OF HELVETIA. (1566)—Why should not they be consecrated by holy Baptism, who *are* God's peculiar people, and *in* the Church of God?‡

MOLINÆUS.§—"The Baptism of water is not, therefore, absolutely necessary to the reconciliation of the infant and its reception into grace: inasmuch as the *reconciliation precedes* the Baptism."

VOETIUS.‖—"The opinion of the Reformed theologians is known,

* Judicia. 40. † Castigat. in quatuor Lib. Bellarm. de amissione grat'æ et Statu Peccat. Heidelberg, 1613. L. vi. 891.

‡ Ch. xx. Ed. Augusti, 72. Niemeyer, 518. Book, I. 158. Hall's Harm. of Conf. 302.

§ Quoted by Witsius, M. S. II. 627. ‖ Quoted by Witsius. M. S. II. 633.

that the efficacy of Baptism is not in *producing* regeneration, but in sealing regeneration *already* produced."

WITSIUS.*—"God is not only free to confer the grace of regeneration on *elect infants before* the use of *Baptism*, but it is credible that He *ordinarily does so*." The margin applies this "to those who die in infancy," but the text shows conclusively that Witsius does not limit the principle to them.

THE LITURGY OF THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND required parents, presenting their children for Baptism, to confess that they "acknowledged them as *sanctified* in *Christ*, and, on *that account, as members* of His Church, to be Baptized."

§ 19. GRACE BEFORE BAPTISM.

Grace in no sense waits on Baptism, but Baptism waits on Grace: Baptism is not a means of Grace, but Grace is a means of real Baptism; in the Calvinistic System we are baptized not in order to obtain Grace, but because we are supposed already to have it.

CALVIN.—"They are embraced in the covenant *from the womb*." "By what right could we admit them to Baptism, except that they are heirs of the promise? For unless already *before it* (*jam ante*) the promise of life pertained to them, he would profane Baptism who would give it to them."

MARTYR.†—"Little ones, who truly belong to this election, are endowed with the Holy Spirit *before* they are baptized." "Nor would we baptize little children, unless we supposed that they *already* belong to the Church and to Christ."

FORMER CONFESSION OF HELVETIA (1530–32).—"Baptism is the font of regeneration, the which the Lord doth give to *his elect* (*electis suis*). In which holy font we baptize our infants. Especially seeing that we ought godly to *presume* of their election.‡"

RIVETUS.§—"True Baptism requires that they *shall be in* the covenant, to whom it is administered."

AMES.‖—"Unless they are to be esteemed as members of the Church, they ought not to be baptized. For Baptism is, in its own nature, the seal of an ingrafting *already made* into Christ, and, consequently, into His Church."

§ 20. BAPTISM WITHOUT OBJECTIVE FORCE.

According to Calvinism, Baptism has no objective force even to elect infants.

* Mi c. Sac. II. 631.

† Loc. Com. IV. viii. ‡ 15 in Rom. VI. § Art xxi. Ed. Augusti, 99, Ed. Niemeyer, 112, 120. Beuk, I. 55. Hall's Harmony, 303. ‖ Ad Grnes. Exerc. 88, p. 420.

ZURICH CONSENSUS,* between Calvin and the Zurich ministers 1549: "Whatever good is conferred on us by (the Sacraments) is not by their own virtue, even though you comprehend in it the promises. The Sacraments are *called* seals, but the Spirit alone is properly the seal."

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.†—"Is the outward Baptism of water that washing away of sin? It is not, for the blood of Christ (and the Holy Ghost) alone, purges us from all sin."

BODIUS, ‡ arguing against the view that children are not members of Christ *before* Baptism, says: "If this opinion were true, it would follow that the children of Christians, no less than of Turks, Jews, and heathen, should be prohibited from Baptism until they are of a fitting age to make a profession of faith for themselves; for there is *no reason* why the seal of the covenant should be impressed on those who have nothing to do with the covenant itself."

WITSIUS.§—"Communion with Christ, and with His mystic body, seems to *precede* Baptism in elect infants; at least in the judgment of charity. For as an argument for infant Baptism, the orthodox (Calvinists) constantly say: They to whom belong the covenant of grace, the fellowship of Christ and of the Church, and whose is the kingdom of heaven, ought to be baptized. But all these things belong to *elect and* federate infants."

§ 21. DEFINITION OF BAPTISM.

DR. Heppe, in his Dogmatic of the Evangelical Reformed Church, (1861), presents the doctrines of the Calvinistic Churches, and illustrates his text with citations from their *standard theologians.*

THE definitions of Baptism which Heppe gives as purely Calvinistic and Reformed, are as follows: "Baptism is a sacrament, in which those *to whom the covenant of God's grace pertains*, are washed with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that is, that to those who are baptized, it is *signified and sealed*, that they are received into the *communion* of the covenant of grace, *are inserted into Christ*, and His mystic body, the Church, are justified by God, for the sake of Christ's blood shed for us, and *regenerated* by Christ's Spirit." This definition he gives from POLANUS. Another and shorter one he furnishes from WOLLEBIUS as follows: "Baptism is the first sacrament of the new covenant, in which to the *elect* received into the family of God, by the outward application of water, *the remission of sins and regeneration by the blood of Christ and by the Holy Spirit are sealed.*" He gives only one other, which is from HEIDEGGER, thus: Baptism is

* Enerv Bellarm. II. 49. † NIEMEYER, Coll. Conf. ‡ Qu. LXXII. Augusti, 556. Niemeyer, 408, 445. § Quoted by Witsius, 194.

the *sacrament of regeneration, in which to each and to every one embraced in the covenant of God, the inward washing from sins through the blood and Spirit of Christ,* is declared *and sealed.*

§ 22. BAPTISM OF NON-ELECT INFANTS.

Calvinism particularly gives prominence to the idea that non-elect infants receiving Baptism, receive no benefit.

ZURICH CONSENSUS, between Calvin and the Zurich ministers.—"We zealously teach that God does not promiscuously exercise His power on all who receive the Sacraments, but *only on the elect.* He enlightens unto faith none but those whom *He has forcordained unto life.* By the *secret power* (arcana virtute) of His Spirit, he effects that *the elect* receive those things which the sacraments offer."* "To the *reprobate* equally with the *elect* the signs are administered, but the truth of the signs reaches only the *latter.*" †

ZANCHIUS.‡—"The power of Baptism has place in the elect alone. They only are baptized, not with water merely but with the Spirit also. Though all these things (enumerated previously) are affirmed of Baptism, and are truly attributed to it as the organ of the Holy Spirit, and all who are baptized are truly said to become and be such *Sacramentally;* yet we believe that these things are fulfilled *in fact,* only in the elect. All are baptized with water, but the *elect only,* with the Spirit; all receive the sign, but the *elect only* are made partakers of the thing signified and offered through Baptism."

BUCAN.§—"Incorporation into Christ, and the benefits which follow it, are in no wise really conferred on the reprobate, though he be baptized with water. For God efficaciously calls, justifies, regenerates, and glorifies those *only* whom He has *chosen* and *predestinated* to these things. The *elect,* whether *infants* or adults, whether in Baptism or before Baptism, are equally incorporated in Christ."

WITSIUS.‖—"On such Baptism confers *nothing* truly good; it signifies or seals *no* grace, *no* salvation; no more than a piece of wax, with a beautiful stamp on it, attached to a blank sheet of paper—or, if you prefer, attached to a sheet so defiled with blots that nothing good can be written on it. Well has Robert, Bishop of Salisbury, said: 'Sacraments, as they are seals of grace, and of God's promise, exert their power spiritually in *those only* who are sons of the promise and heirs of grace.'"

§ 23. INFANTS OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH.

Calvinism therefore holds, that as infants who are born of

* De Efficac. Baptis. in Inf. Misc. Sac. II. 725. † Niemeyer, Collect. Conf. 195. ‡ Opera, VIII. 516. § Institutiones Theol. Genev. 1625. Loc. XLVII. p. 54. ‖ Miscell. Sacr. II. 618.

parents who are outside of the Church, are not of the Church, they are not to be baptized.

BUCAN.*—"Infants descended from believing and baptized parents are to be baptized—but the children of unbelievers, who are not in the Church, and the children of the unbaptized, are *not* to be baptized." "Are not the little ones of the unbelievers, neglected by them, and taken into the care of Christians, to be baptized? No, not till they become adults . . . ."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, XXVIII. iv.—"The infants of ONE or BOTH *believing parents* are to be baptized."

LARGER CATECHISM. (QU. 166).—"Baptism is *not* to be administered to *any that are out of the visible Church* . . but infants descended from parents, either, both, or but one of them professing faith in Christ, and obedience to Him, are . . to be baptized."

§ 24. CALVINISM AND ANABAPTISM.

Hence Calvinism narrows to the last degree any real difference between its own views and those of *Anabaptists,* or Baptists. In stating the points of controversy between Calvinists and Mennonites and other *Anabaptists,* the Calvinist divines constantly represent themselves and the *Anabaptists* as perfectly agreed, so far as the Baptism of the children of unbelievers is concerned.

The Calvinistic argument against the *Anabaptist* objection to infant Baptism, constantly rests on the theory, that infants have a right to Baptism only as they possess certain spiritual qualifications. Where those qualifications are not to be presumed the Anabaptist objection stands, and Calvinism concedes it.

Thus BULLINGER.†—"The kingdom of heaven is of infants. No man is received into the kingdom of heaven unless he be the friend of God: and these are not destitute of the Spirit of God. Children are God's, therefore they have the Spirit of God. Therefore, if they have received the Holy Ghost as well as we; if they be accounted among the people of God as well as we that be grown of age, who can forbid these to be baptized with water in the name of the Lord?"

VAN HOEKE.‡—"There is *no question* between us and the Mennonites as to whether the infants of unbelievers, or of those who are outside of the covenant of God, are to be baptized? For *to these,* both WE and THEY deny Baptism. But the question is, whether the infants of those

* Institutiones Theologicæ. Genev. 1625, 624. † Sermons on the Sacraments. Cambridge, 1840, 183. ‡ Lucubrationes in Cateches. Paint. Lugduni. 1711, p. 310.

who are in the covenant, or *one* of whose parents is in the covenant, are to be baptized?"

THE CONFESSION OF SCOTLAND (1560).—"Baptism appertaineth to the infants *of the faithful.* And so we condemn the error of the Anabaptists."*

THE LATTER HELVETIC CONFESSION (CHAP. XX).—"We condemn the Anabaptists who deny that the *new-born children of the faithful* are *to be* baptized. For *of these* . . is the kingdom of God, and they are in the covenant of God. Why, therefore, should not the sign of God's covenant be given *them?* Why shall not they be initiated by holy Baptism, who are *God's own*, and in the Church of God?" †

CONFESSION OF FRANCE (1559).—"Seeing that together with the parents, God doth account their posterity also to be *of the Church*, we affirm, that infants being born of holy parents [Lat. Sanctis. Fr. fideles], are . . to be baptized." ‡

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM (Qu. 74) rests on the same view.—"Young children . . . by Baptism are separated from the *children of unbelievers.*" In explaining the answer URSINUS § says: "All they, and *they alone* are to be baptized, who are disciples of Christ, that is, who *are*, and who ought to be considered members of the *visible* Church, whether they be adults professing faith and repentance, or be *infants* born in the Church: for all the children *of the faithful* are in the covenant, and in the Church of God, unless they exclude themselves. Hence, also, they are disciples of Christ, because they are born in the Church, which is the school of Christ."

THE CONFESSION OF BELGIA (1566).—"We do detest the error of the Anabaptists, who . . do also condemn the Baptism of infants, yea, of those that be born *of faithful parents.*" ‖

THE CANONS OF THE SYNOD OF DORT (Art. I. xvii.).—"Inasmuch as we are to judge of the will of God from His Word, which testifies that the children of *the faithful* are holy, not indeed by nature, but by the benefit of the gracious covenant in which they are comprehended with their parents; *godly* parents ought not to doubt of the election and salvation of *their* children, whom God calls out of this life in their infancy."

DICKSON (Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh) d. 1662.—"Do not the Anabaptists err, who maintain, That no infants, though born of *believing parents* ought to be baptized? Yes, . . . To *some* infants of *believers*, as well as to others come to age, the Spirit of Christ hath been given." ¶

* Art. XXIII. Ed. Augusti, 166. Niemeyer, 354. Hall's Harm. of Conf. 297.

† Ed. Augusti, 72. Niemeyer, 518. ‡ Art. xxxv. Ed. Augusti, 123. Niemeyer, 325,338. Hall's Harm. of Conf. 307. § Corpus Doctrinæ, 1612, 441. ‖ Art. xxxiv. Ed. Augusti, 193. Niemeyer, 384. Beck, I. 326. Hall's Harm. of Conf. 308.

¶ Truth's Victory. Glasgow, 1772, p. 253.

In regard to the overwhelming majority of the children not only of the race, but of nominal Christendom, Calvinism holds, therefore, that they are not proper subjects of Baptism, and so far concedes much to the Anabaptists practically, and in regard to each particular case of those to whom it grants Baptism, concedes that it cannot prove, that before God this Baptism is valid, or that it is attended with any value whatever. Calvinism grants, that it does not know, in any one case, that the Baptism of an infant is more than a form, and grants that in no case does Baptism, even as an ordinary means, condition or bear upon the salvation of a child. What more could it grant to Anabaptism without granting everything?

§ 25. CHILDREN OF UNBELIEVERS—REPROBATE INFANTS.

Calvinism not only excludes the children of unbelievers from Baptism, but excludes them as a body from salvation.

CALVIN.*—"When the Lord rejects him (the godless man) *with his offspring*, there is certainly no expostulation which we can make with God. . . . If He therefore rejects any one, is it not of *necessity* that such *an one's seed should also be accursed?* . . This therefore is to be held *for certain*, that all who are deprived of the grace of God, are included *under the sentence of eternal death*, whence it follows, that *the children of the reprobate*, whom *the curse of God follows*, *are subject to the same sentence.*"

THE BREMEN THEOLOGIANS AT DORT.†—"Believers' infants *alone*, who die before they reach the age in which they can receive instruction, do we suppose, to be *loved* of God, and *saved*, of His . . good pleasure."

THE THREE BELGIC PROFESSORS, Polyander, Thyseus, and Walæus, at Dort.‡—"Infants born of *parents not in the covenant*, the Scripture pronounces impure and aliens from the covenant of grace."

SIBRAND LUBBERT, at the same Synod, gives his decision in these words.—"There *is an election of infants*, there is a reprobation of infants . . . To the infants of the *Church* belongs the promise . . To the others (infants), who are out of the Church, no promise is made." To this judgment the three Belgic Professors attach their names as approvers.§

FRANCIS GOMAR, at the same Synod, treating of "the Special Reprobation of men to damnation," lays down, as *false*, the thesis that "no one is reprobated, no one is damned, on account of original sin alone:

* On Isaiah xiv. 21, Opera, III.

† Acta Syn. I. Dordr. Judic. 63. ‡ Acta Syn. Dordr. 10. § Do. 20.

consequently there is no reprobation of infants." To this GOMARUS replies: "On account of original sin alone, there is also damnation, which is the wages of every sin, even of sin which is not actual. Therefore also the infants unregenerate, the infants of unbelievers, who are *aliens from the covenant of God, are by nature children of* wrath, without Christ, without *hope*, without God, as also the infants of the world of the ungodly, in the flood, and the infants of the impious Sodomites, in the burning, perished, and were justly subjected to the wrath of God with their parents."

MARCKIUS.*—"Nor is it to be doubted that among these *reprobated* are to be referred . . the *infants of unbelievers*. For though of *individual persons* . . of infants born of unbelievers, we cannot and do not wish particularly to determine, because of God's liberty, and the often secret ways of His Spirit, yet all these are by nature children of wrath, impure, alien, and remote from God, without hope, and left to themselves. God has revealed nothing as decreed or to be done for their salvation, and they are destitute of the ordinary means of grace. So that we ought *utterly to reject, not only their salvation* of which Pelagians dream, but also the Remonstrant (Arminian) theory *that their penalty is one of privation, without sensation*. The terminus to which these are predestined is *eternal death*, destruction, *damnation*. Hence it is fitting to style this the end or terminus, alike of the reprobation and of the creation in time, of the reprobate."

§ 26. THE SECRET IMPEDIMENT.

The Calvinistic system holds that there is a *secret* impediment to the grace of Baptism, in the case of non-elect infants.

MUSCULUS.†—"There are impediments which prohibit the grace of Baptism from having place. They are of two kinds: one *secret*, the other open. The *secret* impediment is, if any one belong not to the number of the *elect*, but is of the reprobate, *this impediment* forever prevents participation of the grace of Christ."

Hence the Baptism of *elect*, and of reprobate infants, is made indiscriminate to keep the *secret* from us.

MUSCULUS.‡—"In the Church of Christ it cannot be observed that only the elect should be baptized. It is as in the Old Testament, in which God Himself so instituted the initial sacrament, as unwilling that in its administration a *discrimination* should be made *by human presumption* between the elect and the reprobate. Nay, He hath so *preserved to Himself* the knowledge of *this discrimination* that He commanded the sacrament of His grace to be administered to all *infants*, the *reprobate* as well as the elect, to Esau, whom He hated in his mother's womb, as well as to Jacob, whom He loved before he was born."

* Comp. Theol. Christianæ. Amstelod. 1722, VII. xxxiii. xxxiv.
† Loci Communes. Basiliæ. 1599, 336. ‡ Loci.

§ 27. NON-ELECT INFANTS HAVE NO RIGHT TO BAPTISM.

Hence non-elect infants have not strictly a right to be baptized, and if they could be known it would be wrong to baptize them.

CALVIN.*—"God, by the secret grace of His Spirit, causes that they (sacraments) shall not be without effect *in the elect*. To *the reprobate* they are merely dead and useless figures."

GRYNÆUS.—"They who have been baptized with water only, not also with the Holy Spirit and fire, ought to be regarded as *not baptized*."

ZANCHIUS.†—"In the Confession of the Church of Strasbourg, 1539, in Article XVIII., the preachers are admonished, that they baptize no one, except this sentence be either *expressed* or *understood*: 'I baptize this person, O God, in accordance with Thy election, and the purpose of Thy Will.'"

WITSIUS.‡—"If the *most strict* right of Baptism be considered, it *belongs only* to the elect in the verity of the thing, and in the judgment of God, which is ever in conformity with the truth. For inasmuch as Baptism is a sign and seal of that covenant in which He makes over to those who are in His covenant, the goods of saving grace, which have also a sure connection with eternal life, it follows that they who have no right to the goods of the covenant, and never are to have any, have no right before the tribunal of God to the seal of the covenant. The administrators of sacred things, who are to act in the individual cases, from the sole judgment of charity, *know not to distinguish the elect from the non-elect*; and thus far sin not, if also perchance they confer baptism on those to whom in strict right it is not due."

GERDES.§—"The legitimate subjects of baptism are *the elect* and believing alone, since the good things of the covenant can be sealed to those only for whom they are designed, and to whom they actually come."

It is evident, then, that on the Calvinistic hypothesis, in Baptism the great name of the adorable Trinity is invoked upon what is always uncertain and sometimes false. Zanchius, to avoid so shocking a possibility, favored the idea that infants should always be baptized *conditionally*, the condition expressed or implied in Baptism being that it was according to the election and purpose of God.‖

* On Rom. IV. 11. Opera, VII. † Opera, vii. 286.
‡ De efficac. Baptismi in infantib. Misc. Sacr. II. 617. § Doctrina Gratiæ. Duisburg. 1744, 342. ‖ Quot. in Limborch Th. Chr. III. V., probably the passage we have quoted: Opera, vii. 286.

§ 28. CALVINISM WITHOUT A LOGICAL ARGUMENT AGAINST ANABAPTISM.

Calvinism has therefore no logical ground against the *Anabaptist* rejection of infant Baptism.

CALVIN.*—"If an *Anabaptist* were disputing with you, I think *no other* defence would avail you, than this, that they, with justice are received to Baptism whom God has adopted *before they were born*, and to whom He has promised to be a Father. For *unless* God transmit His grace from fathers to sons, to receive new-born infants into the Church would be a mere *profanation of Baptism*."

BEZA.†—"No one is to be adorned with the symbol of the family of the Lord, except we suppose that he is *probably* to be counted in that family."

TREMELLIUS AND BEZA'S New Testament ‡—"Children of believers are indeed, by virtue of the covenant, holy before Baptism, but Baptism comes in, as it were, a seal of holiness."

CLAUBURG.§—"The principle is constantly to be maintained, that Baptism *does not confer* on infants the becoming *sons and heirs* of God; but because they are *already* esteemed in that place and in that rank, before God, the grace of adoption is sealed in their flesh by Baptism. *Otherwise* the *Anabaptists would rightly* forbid their Baptism. Unless the *verity* of the outward sign belongs to them, to call them to a participation of the sign itself would be a mere profanation."

BURMANN.‖—"The power of sacraments is *not to effect* and *produce* a thing, but to signify and seal it." "God is wont to bestow His grace *before* the sacraments are received—of which grace, when they are received, they are but the signs and tokens."

To the *Anabaptists* the Calvinist says: We agree with you that the great mass of infants are not entitled to Baptism; we agree with you that Baptism in no case confers anything objective on the child; the only question between us is, whether the hypothetical sign of a hypothetical condition shall be given them? As God, according to the illustration of Witsius, sometimes sets his seal to blank paper, or paper so scribbled upon that nothing intelligible can be written upon it, and hides from us all of the paper except the place of the seal, and as the value of the seal as a seal all turns upon the contents of the

* Contra Westphal. p. 702. Col. 2. † Vol. I ad defens et Respons Castillionis, 502. ‡ On I Cor. VII. 14. § Quoted by Witsius. Mis. Sac. II. 633. ‖ Synops. VII. IV. XXVIII.

paper, a Calvinistic seal amounts to little more than an engraver's specimen; and, inasmuch as the paper with the true covenant written on it, is just as valid, according to Calvinism, without the seal as with it, the seal seems to be of very little account in any case. Baptism is no more than a seal at most; the seal of empty or blotted paper, in many cases; the seal, at best, of a covenant, to whose force it contributes nothing; a covenant which in no sense is made by it; a covenant which stands in equal force without it. It is hardly worth while for Calvinism, on such a basis, to hold out against Anabaptism. It is therefore not without internal reason that the Calvinistic tendency so often ran out, originally into Anabaptism, that it became a proverb, "a young Calvinist, an old Anabaptist;" that the Anabaptist theories so largely prevail on Calvinistic soils; that the immense growth of the Baptist Church in modern times has taken place where Calvinism has been in the ascendant; that so many Calvinists have become Baptists; that so many Baptists are Calvinists, and that in the Calvinistic churches there is so great and growing a neglect of infant Baptism.

§ 29. THE MEANS OF GRACE IN THEIR RELATION TO INFANTS.

Calvinism acknowledges that there are no *ordinary* means for the salvation of infants.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION XIV. 1: "The grace of faith . . . is *ordinarily* wrought by the ministry of the *Word*: by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments and prayer, it is increased and strengthened." Here it is implied that the Word, read or heard, is the sole means by which grace is *ordinarily* wrought.

Calvinism allows of no potency of the Word except a didactic one (XIV. 2): the sacraments "*and prayer*" *increase* faith but they do not *produce* it.

There is, then, no *ordinary* means for working that faith in infants, without which grace of faith it is acknowledged by Calvinists they cannot be saved. All infants' salvation comes, therefore, into the sphere of the extraordinary, is without means, and requires unmediated divine operations.

THE POSITION OF CHILDREN AN AFTER-THOUGHT. This is largely connected with and solved by the more general fact,

that Calvinism makes no proper position for infants in its system, but brings them in by after-thought.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION, XXV. 2: "*The visible Church* . . . *consists* of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, *together with* their children."

This seems to assert that children of professors are *ipso facto* members of the visible Church—and this the Calvinistic theologians constantly maintain. *Profession* of the true religion puts one set of its members into the visible Church—natural birth of these professors puts another set into it—but no unregenerate human being is introduced by God into His visible Church—the sower of the *tares* is always the devil. Those who are in the visible Church in real conformity with God's appointment are also *ipso facto* part of the invisible Church. But in Calvinism the law of natural descent sows tares continually in the visible Church, bringing into it non-elect children, the children of unworthy professors as a class, and often the children of the elect themselves, non-elect children of the elect.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION XXVIII. 1: "Baptism is . . . . ordained . . . for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church."

The contradiction here seems palpable. The Confession XXV. 2, asserts that the Church consists, in part, of the *children* of professors, and again asserts, XXVIII. 1, that Baptism solemnly *admits* them into the visible Church—that is, the Church in part *consists* of those who have not been admitted into it—and those are admitted into it of whom it already consists—or are there two admissions, one solemn, the other not solemn? The conflict is too palpable to have escaped the notice of Calvinistic divines. BOSTON * quoted and endorsed by Dr. Shaw † harmonizes the two thus: Baptism "does not *make* them members of the visible Church, but *admits* them solemnly thereto . . for the infants of believing parents . . are Christians and visible Church members"—that is *after* the Church consists of them, *after* they are Christians and *after* they are members, they are solemnly *admitted* to the

* Complete Body of Divinity, III. 307. † Exposition of the Confession 7th, Edinburgh, 1855.

Church. The real solution seems to us to be this, that infants were not thought of at this point. The writer had adults alone in his eye. But this belief, if it be accepted, confirms our view, that infants are with difficulty brought into the Calvinistic system—as indeed they are into any system which on the one side denies Palagianism and on the other the objective force of Baptism. It shows that baptism in the case of infants, and in that of adults rests on exactly opposite constructions: You baptize adults because Baptism admits them to the Church; you baptize infants because they are already in the Church.

"It tends greatly," says CUNNINGHAM, "to introduce obscurity and confusion into our whole conceptions upon the subject of Baptism, that we see it ordinarily administered to infants, and very seldom to adults. This leads us insensibly to form very defective and erroneous conceptions of its design and effect, or rather to live with our minds very much in the state of blanks, so far as concerns any distinct and definite views upon the subject. There is a difficulty felt . . in laying down any very distinct and definite doctrine as to the precise bearing and efficacy of Baptism in the case of infants, to whom alone ordinarily we see it administered. And hence it becomes practically, as well as theoretically important to remember, that we ought to form our primary and fundamental conceptions of Baptism from the Baptism of *adults* . . . . It is manifest, that the general doctrine or theory with respect to the design and effect of Baptism, . . must undergo some modification in its application to the case of infants. One fundamental position concerning the sacraments is, that they are intended for believers, and, of course, for believers only, unless some *special exceptional case can be made out*, as we are persuaded can be done in the case of infants of believers." "Baptism is described in our Confession (XXVIII. 1), as 'ordained . . to be *unto him* a sign and seal' . . .It applies primarily and fully only to the case of adult Baptism." "The fundamental, spiritual blessings on which the salvation of man universally depends,—justification and regeneration by faith—are not conveyed through the instrumentality of the sacraments, but . . on the contrary, they must *already* exist before even Baptism can be lawfully or safely received." *

Dr. Cunningham, was not unconscious of the nature of the ground on which he was treading, and acknowledges, to meet the fact, that "these statements may, at first view, appear to be large concessions to those who oppose the lawfulness of the Baptism of infants." †

* (See Cunningham; Histor. Theology, 1864. II. 25, 127, 144). † Do. do. 145.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION VIII. 8: "To *all* those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, He doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; . . . revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them . . to believe and obey; and governing their hearts by this Word." . .

Here in spite of the sweeping "all," there is no consideration of children whatever.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION X. 1: "*All* those whom God hath predestinated unto life . . He is pleased, . . to call by His Word and Spirit . . enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God."

Here again, in spite of the sweeping "all," infants are not embraced.

Calvinism holds, that elect infants are *justified* infants; and yet defines justification so as to make it impossible to infants. Westminster Confession XI. 1: "Those whom God effectually calleth He also freely justifieth." (Do. vi.) "God did from all eternity decree to justify *all the elect.* Nevertheless, they are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth in due time actually apply Christ unto them."

ELECT infants *may* be in any case justified while they are infants: they *must* be justified while they are infants if they die in infancy. So Calvinism allows. But the whole confessional conception of justification is one which excludes infants.

"They (the justified) receiving and resting on him . . by faith . . . Faith *thus* receiving . . is the alone instrument of justification."

The Calvinistic answer is that adults are spoken of, but the answer is the accusation. The accusation is that the conception is one which embraces none but adults, and that conception *alone* is constantly presented.

Calvinism maintains not only the possibility, but the absolute necessity of the *regeneration* of infants, but knows of no means for that regeneration and no assurance of faith that any particular child is regenerate. "Elect infants, dying in infancy are *regenerated,*" (Westminster Confession x. x.) but the conception of regeneration as presented in the Confession makes it inapplicable to infants.

§ 30. CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN ITS BEARING ON INFANT SALVATION.

Calvinism holds that out of the invisible Church there is no salvation whatever, and that out of the visible Church there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

MARTYR.*—"It is necessary that they (children) belong unto Christ and the Church, seeing, out of it, there is no salvation."

URSINUS.†—"It is required, of necessity, that in this life they (the elect) be brought unto the Church, though it be sometimes even at the very point of death." "*No man* can be saved out of the Church. Whomsoever God hath chosen and elected to the *end,* which is eternal life, them hath He chosen to the *means;* which is the inward and *outward* calling."

VOSSIUS.‡—"Nor do we exclude the children of unbelievers alone, but the children of those who are open heretics: to whom Baptism should be refused even though it be asked by the parents."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION X. 4.—"Others not elected . . cannot be saved: much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatever . . and to assert . . . that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested." Larger Catechism, Q. 60: "They who, having never heard the Gospel, know not Jesus Christ and believe not in Him, cannot be saved. Christ is the Saviour only of His body, the Church." Q. 61: "They only (are saved) who are true members of the Church invisible."

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION XXV. 1.—"The . . church . . *invisible* consists of the whole number of the elect." (Do. ii.)—"The *visible* Church . . is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation."

These principles in their connections,

1. Clearly exclude the entire heathen, Mohammedan and Jewish world from salvation. It is a Calvinistic article of faith that men not professing the *Christian faith* cannot be saved.

2. Connecting with this the doctrine that as is the state of the parents so is the *presumed* state of the children *individually,* and the *certain* state of the children as a *class,* it follows that the moral *presumption* is that each child of the non-Christian world is lost, and the moral *certainty* is that they are lost as a class. It is certain that not one of them is of the visible church, "out of which there is no ordinary possibility of sal-

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* Common Places. † Sum of Christian Religion, Lond. 1633, 350, 352. Corpus Doctrinæ, 1612. 359, 361, 362. ‡ De Baptism. Di p. xv. p. 190.

vation," and there is no evidence, no reason even, for hope that a single one of them is of the Church invisible.

3. This looks gloomy enough, but there is still another dark point. "The visible Church . . consists of all those that *profess the true religion* (Westminster Confession XXVI. i.) "*The True Religion*," what is that? Strictly construed, Calvinism—which claims—and must for consistency's sake claim to be "the true religion." Confessions are meant to define "the true religion," in the sense in which those who make and adhere to them define "the true religion." We understand the Westminster Confession to furnish the Presbyterian answer to the question, What is the true religion? Does this then mean to exclude a large part of the children of nominal Christendom, as it does their parents, from the visible Church, from all presumption of election, and all probability of salvation? We are afraid that it does. It has never been so logically pressed as to exclude from hope *all* that are not professed Calvinists, but it has been pressed to the exclusion of Papists, Arminians, and the various bodies of nominally Christian errorists. "The true religion" seems to be synonymous with what is called, XXIV. iii., "the true reformed religion," by which is meant in the Westminster Confession, as the usage and controversies of the time will show, the Calvinistic religion, as over against Romanism, Lutheranism, and the then dominant doctrinal tendency of the Church of England. It is there said: "It is the duty of *Christians* to marry only in the Lord. And therefore such as profess the true Reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or *other* idolaters."

"Christians" and "such as profess the Reformed religion," are one and the same thing: the inference rests on the assumption of their identity. "Papists" are not "Christians," but are idolaters," lumped with the "other idolaters"—the major part of nominal Christendom being carried over to the general realm of Juggernaut and Mumbo Jumbo.

The same paragraph further forbids marrying "with such as . . maintain damnable heresies," and of such Christendom unhappily holds not a few. As are the parents, so are

the children to be presumed to be; wrong-minded Christendom is out of the Church visible and invisible, so are their children as a class, and as a class presumed to be lost. All Pagandom, all Islam, all the Jews, Roman Christendom, Greek Christendom (by parity of reason), and a large part of the Protestant world, under the Calvinistic construction, moving out of the ordinary possibility of salvation, the children doomed as a class, without the possibility, not to say certainty of the salvation of a single one! Surely this is a sufficient liberal provision for damnation, but it is not open to the charge of being rather a parsimonious one for salvation?

§ 31. CALVINISM AND ROMANISM ON INFANT SALVATION.

In the controversies between Calvinists and Romanists, the attitude of the former on the question of infant damnation is decisive, if there were nothing else, on the question in which Dr. Hodge considers that we have made an assertion without due warrant. The Romanists assert that there is a *Limbus infantum*, a place in the other world in which the souls of unbaptized infants endure the penalty of loss (*damni*), but not of positive suffering (*sensus*). To this the attitude of the classic Calvinistic divines is invariable. It is 1: that elect infants are saved, though unbaptized. 2: that non-elect infants, whether baptized or not, enter not upon a Limbus of loss—a negative damnation, but on a hell of suffering, a positive and eternal damnation. 3: They charge it upon Rome as a Pelagian error, that she softens unduly the state of lost infants.

CALVIN AND PIGHIUS.—One of Calvin's most distinguished Romish opponents was ALBERT PIGHIUS (d. 1543), who wrote against him a work in two books, "Concerning free will and grace." Cologne, 1542. He maintained "that original sin in young children is nothing else but the actual sin of Adam that is imputed to them, and that, properly speaking, there is no blemish in them of inherent sin."*

CALVIN†, in reply to Pighius, says: "If Pighius holds that original sin is not sufficient to damn men, and that the secret council of God is not to be admitted, what will he do with infant children, who, before

* Du Pin's Ecclesiastical History of the Sixteenth Century. Lond., 1710. Fol. I. 427. Herzog, Real. En. XI 662, XV. 216. † De Æterna D i Prædestinatione. Tom. VIII. 611.

they have reached an age at which they can give any such specimens . . [as he demands], are snatched from this life . . For inasmuch as the conditions of birth and death were alike to infants who died in Sodom and those who died in Jerusalem: and there were no difference in their works: why will Christ, at the last day, separate some to stand at His right hand, others at His left?"

Calvin assumes as granted, and as undisputed that the infants of Sodom were damned. He appeals to it as a known something to settle a contested point, and after the words we have cited goes on to say: "Who will not adore this wonderful judgment of God whereby it comes to pass that some are born at Jerusalem, whence soon they pass to a better life, while Sodom, the gates of the lower regions, receives others at their birth?"

Pighus assumed that children have no inherent sin, in order to prove that they ought not to be positively damned. Calvin assumed that children are damned, to strengthen the proof that they have inherent sin. The damnation of infants is the *Pou sto* from which Calvin proposes to move Pighius' world of error. The tone of assurance in the old Calvinistic divines in asserting infant damnation is very striking.

They not only do not doubt the doctrine, but they assume that no man in his senses *can* doubt it. Not only is an argument not weakened by involving infant perdition, but infant perdition stiffens up an argument otherwise weak. Never was error more effectually driven to bay, in their judgment, than when it was shown that if that error were granted, infant salvation, or even the middle state of Limbus, would follow. The doctrine of infant damnation virtually formed a part of the Calvinistic analogy of faith.

CHAMIER AGAINST THE ROMANISTS.—The name of CHAMIER (d. 1621) is one of the greatest, not only among Calvinistic divines, but in all theological literature. His Panstratiæ Catholicæ (1626) is the ablest work from a Calvinistic hand in the great Roman Catholic Controversy, and takes its general rank with books like Chemnitz's Etamen and Gerhard's Confessio Catholica. It was prepared at the request of the Synod of Larochelle.* There is no difference of opinion among competent judges as to its distinguished merits, and it is justly

* Herzog's Real Encycl. II. 632. Bayle's Dict. Art. Chamier.

regarded among all Calvinists as one of the highest authorities. The word "Catholic," in the title of Chamier's book, and throughout, is used in its Protestant sense, as equivalent to "Christian," or "Orthodox," and by the "Catholics," Chamier means especially the "Calvinists." It is the "Catholics" against the "Papists," who appear in this book. In his discussion of the "penalty of original sin," * Chamier first states the views of the Papists, as three-fold: 1. "That infants (dying in original sin) are excluded from the kingdom of heaven; yet enjoy outside of it a certain natural blessedness." 2. "That those who die in original sin only, are not happy, yet endure no pain, or '*penalty* of sense' (*pœnam sensus*), but are punished only with the penalty of loss (*pœna damni*), that is, are deprived of the vision of God." 3. "Others liberate them from that torment (Mark ix.) 'in which the worm dieth not,' but affirm that the loss of blessedness will be accompanied by internal pain, so that their penalty will be one both of loss and of sense." Bellarmine regards the third as the most probable, but the majority of the Roman Catholic divines accept the second.

In opposition to these mitigating constructions Chamier declares "the Catholics" (Calvinists) maintain that infants also, guilty of original sin, are by God's just sentence damned (*reos solius originalis peccati, justa Dei sententia damnari*): and that in that damnation they are not merely exiled from the kingdom of heaven, but in very deed suffer that eternal fire which is appointed for the devil and his angels ("*re veri pati ignem æternum, assignatum diabolo et Angelis ejus.*") * * "There is not merely a privation of eternal blessedness, but also real pains in hell, loss conjoined with sense." For the soundness of these positions Chamier argues at great length.

MARESIUS AGAINST THE ROMANISTS.—Another of the greatest names, in high renown for ability and Calvinistic orthodoxy, is that of MARESIUS (d. 1673). † He has been called

* Chamierus Contractus sive Panstratim Catholic. D. Chamieri theologi summi Epitome. Opera Fr. Spanheim. Genev. 1643. Fol. 797, 798.

† Pfaff, etc. Herzog: Real-Encyl. Art. Maresius. Bayle's Dictionary: Do. Walch Einleit., in Rel. Str. auss. d. Ev. Luth. Kirchen. Th. 470.

the Calvinistic Calovius. His life was a life of contest against the errors outside of Calvinism, and errors which tried to shelter themselves within it. His greatest work is in his reply to Tirinus, the Jesuit, who had added to his Commentary (1632) an "Index of Controversies on Matters of Faith." Maresius first gives Tirinus in full, in his own words, and then adds his own strictures. Tirinus says, speaking of the "punishment of original sin:" "In the other life, original sin, for example, in the case of infants who by it are unfitted for that life, is punished eternally. First, by a mournful want of the society of the Saints, and of the vision and fruition of God. Second, by a want of natural blessedness * * they are in prison, light and pleasant indeed, yet of the nature of hell (*infernali*), in which, under the power of the devil, they dwell to eternity."

The completest answer to Tirinus, had it been possible on Calvinistic grounds, would have been a denial that infants are lost at all—there is no limbus for them—they pass, without exception, to heaven. But the answer of Maresius is exactly the opposite: there is no limbus for lost infants, nothing but hell. Maresius* says: "There are two rocks to be avoided here: For I. We do not think that the children of the faithful * * who die before baptism, are to be excluded from the kingdom of heaven." II. The punishment of those (children) who are not received into the kingdom of heaven, we hold to be eternal death, not merely that of loss (in the Socinian or Papal sense), but also of sense; hence, we rightly reject that third place which our adversaries call the Limbus of children, for 1. Eternal death is the wages of every kind of sin, and therefore of original sin, and so ought to be the portion of those" (children) "who are shut out from heaven and eternal life. 2. There are two paths only—one goes to life and heaven, the other to perdition and hell. 3. Into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth—not into a '*light* and *pleasant*' prison, as Tirinus feigns—are they cast who are not admitted to the joys of heaven. 4. They who are not wheat, are assigned to unquenchable fire. To feign a middle order, who are neither wheat nor chaff—neither elect nor reprobate—neither redeemed nor unredeemed by Christ—what is this but to rave? 5. If even the infants who are redeemed by Christ, and who are to be saved in heaven, are not free from temporal death and those pains and miseries which are penalties of nature, why should we exempt *from the pains of hell even as to sense, those*" (*infants*) "*whom Christ did not redeem*, and of whom he sustained neither the persons nor penalties on the cross. 7. This view was the invention of Pelagius and the ancient Pelagians. 8. It is opposed to the view of Augustine and of his followers."

* Theologiæ Elenchticæ Novæ Synopsis. Groningæ, 1648. 2 V. 4to, I. 539.

Maresius then cites passages from Augustine and his disciples which teach that unbaptized infants, even those who are unbaptized because they die unborn, are to "be punished with the everlasting torment of eternal fire" (*ignus æterni sempiterno supplicio puniendos*). Maresius, after quoting these passages in his own behalf against Tirinus, says that "Augustine and his followers erred in seeming to bind the justifying, regenerating and sanctifying grace of Christ to the outward sacrament of Baptism," and then adds: "but what they hold, that *infants*, the guilt of whose original sin God has not remitted for Christ's sake, and whom he has not washed from the stain of it through the grace of regeneration, *are, in common with other reprobates, to undergo the punishment of eternal death is most true*" (*quod statuunt pœnam mortis æternæ cum aliis reprobis subituros infantes . . est verissimum*)."

And even when Calvinism began to reveal a mitigating tendency, it still held for a long time firmly to the idea, over against the Pelagianism, as it considered it, of the Church of Rome, that non-elect infants are damned.

On the question: "Whether original sin of its own nature merits *eternal damnation*, or simply excludes from the kingdom of heaven, and deprives of the beatific vision unbaptized infants?" Lampe * asserts the former, over against the Roman Catholics who maintain the latter.

* Rudimenta Theolog. Elenchticæ, Bremæ, 1729, p. 55.

RESULT. We write it with sorrow, but truth compels us to say that on this point the Calvinistic doctrine is far more shocking than that of the Roman Catholic Church, for it casts upon the thousands even of baptized children the shadow of doubt, substituting in the best cases a mere charitable presumption, for a firm assurance, and outside of these, leaves to eternal privation and eternal misery, the great mass of dying infants who are *not* "children of the faithful."

§ 32. CALVINISM AND PELAGIANISM.

Calvinism constantly maintains the doctrine of infant damnation, as essential to a consistent position against Pelagianism. This point has already been made, in other connections, in a number of our quotations. It would be easy to add to them.

STAPFER.—Stapfer* states the ninth objection of the *Pelagians* in these terms: "*To subject infants to eternal* punishments because of Adam's sin would be to deal more severely with them than with the devil himself, or with Adam, who himself committed sin." In his reply to this, Stapfer says: "As to the children of unbelievers we believe that they will be separated from the communion of God, and hence in the very fact that as children of wrath and cursing, they are excluded from the beatific communion of God, *they will be damned.*"

CALVIN AGAINST SERVETUS.

The controversy with Servetus comes into the same general line of argument, and may therefore properly be introduced here.

The whole body of Genevan pastors, fifteen in number, with Calvin heading the list,† charge upon Servetus, as one of his errors—the errors which cost him his life—that he asserts that "he dare condemn none of the (infant) offspring of Ninevites or Barbarians to hell (*futurum gehennam*) because, in his opinion, a merciful Lord, who hath freely taken away the sins of the godless, would never so severely condemn those by whom no godless act has been committed, and who are most innocent images of God," and further he infers that "all who are taken from life as infants and children are exempt from eternal death, though they be elsewhere called accursed."‡

* Institut. Theolog. polemic. Tiguri, 1716, IV. 517.

† Refutatio Errorum Michaelis Serveti, Opera, Tom. VIII. 559. ‡ Do. do. 597.

§ 33. CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM, ON THE ELECTION AND REPROBATION OF INFANTS, AND THE INSANE. CASTALIO, THE FORERUNNER OF ARMINIANISM.

CALVIN AGAINST CASTALIO. CALVIN* wrote with great bitterness against CASTALIO, who had been his friend, but who speedily showed the working of the tendencies which matured at a later period unto Arminianism:

"You deny that it is lawful for God, except for misdeed, to condemn any human being. Nevertheless numberless infants are removed from life. Put forth now your virulence against God, who precipitates into eternal death harmless new-born children (*innoxios fœtus*) torn from their mother's bosoms. Your masters, Servetus, Pighius, and such-like dogs (*similes canes*), say at least that before the world was created some were condemned whom God foreknew worthy of destruction. But you will not concede that He devotes to eternal death any except those who for perpetrated evil deeds would be exposed to penalty under earthly judges . . . You do not hesitate to overturn the whole order of divine justice."

It is in meeting objectors of the school of Castalio, CALVIN† says: "Whence hath it come that the fall of Adam hath involved in eternal death so many nations with their infant children without remedy, unless, because it so pleased God? Here the tongues that have been so voluble it becomes to be mute. That the decree is fearful, I confess: yet no man can deny that God foreknew before He created him what end man should have; and foreknew it because He had so ordained it by His decree." "There are those born among men, devoted from the womb to certain death, who by their destruction glorify God's name." ‡

ARMINIUS.—When the element of opposition to Calvinism, which had smouldered in it from its beginning, broke into a light flame in Arminius (1560-1609), the damnation of infants was one of the first points of assault on the one side, of firm, repeated statements and defense on the other. The fiercer struggle which followed the death of Arminius, is full of illustrations of the unrelenting tenacity with which Calvinism held as essential to sound doctrine the reality of infant reprobation and of infant damnation. Arminius, the pupil of Beza,

* De occulta Dei Providentia (1558), Opera. Amsteledam. 1667. Tom. VIII. 644, 645.

† Institut. Lib III. XXIII. 7. Opera; IX. 254. Compared with Fetherstone's Translation, Edinburgh, 1587. ‡ Do. do. § 6.

who was Calvin's greatest scholar, and of Grynæus, was high in repute in the Church of Holland, and in 1604 as successor of Junius, became Professor of Theology in the University of Leyden, and received from the hand of Gomarus the Doctorate. Chosen to defeat the system of Calvin and Beza, his more careful examination of the system led him to reject it. His learning and his mildness are beyond all dispute. His desire was not to magnify the points of difference between himself and the Calvinists, but to reduce them in bulk, and to soften them in tone as much as possible. In 1608 he was summoned before the Orders of Holland, and commanded explicitly to state his views on the doctrines in dispute. In stating the views of the Calvinistic divines, which he controverted "as they are embraced everywhere (*passim*) in their own writings," he notes that they hold that "the children of the faithful and holy, God leads to salvation by a shorter way (than this of adults), if they depart this life before they come to riper years; *that is to say, if so be* (*nimirum siquidem*) *they belong to the number of the elect* (*whom God alone knoweth*)."

"The means of the execution of reprobation to eternal death pertains in part to *all the rejected and reprobate* (whether they reach adult life or *die before they reach it*), partly to some only. The means common to the whole is *desertion;* the means peculiar to some is hardening."*

THE CONTRA-REMONSTRANT (CALVINISTIC) RESPONSE. 1611.

The statement of Arminius as to the Calvinistic doctrine of infant reprobation was never denied—on the contrary every reference to it shows that there was no disposition to dispute its correctness. The doctrine might be palliated in the mode of statement, but as to the fact involved the Calvinists and Arminians do not differ. The Calvinists in their Response, 1611, say:

"As elect of God are also to be esteemed (*habendos*) . . the children of the covenant, so long as they do not in fact (*reipsa*) *demonstrate the contrary*, wherefore, faithful parents should not doubt concerning the salvation of their children, when they die in infancy."

* The defense is given in full in Jagers: Hist. Eccles. Sec. dec. Sept. Tubingæ, 1691. Ann. 1608, pp. 301-328.

This is the theory we constantly meet with: First, that it is to be *presumed* that all the children of the elect are elect; second, that the presumption is often shown to be groundless by the after life of these children; third, that this presumption, often fallacious and never certain, is the only refuge of parents who love their children—they are presumed to be elect, and as they die before they can "in fact demonstrate the contrary," the presumption, such as it is, is left in full force.

§ 34. THE SYNOD OF DORT.

The National Synod of Dort, 1618, 1619, was meant, if possible, to unite the entire Calvinistic Churches against the common foe. At the outstart it was not so much Arminians who charged Calvinists with teaching infant reprobation and damnation, as it was Calvinists, who charged on Arminians, as a deadly error, that their principles legitimately led to a denial of this doctrine, though the Arminians had not yet consistency or courage enough distinctly to make the denial in an unreserved form. For so strong was the current of Calvinism in regard to infant reprobation and infant damnation, that even the *Remonstrant Arminians* could not directly set themselves wholly against it. The Arminians at first acknowledged a sort of negative hell for some infants (the *pœna damni*), and the Calvinists, over against this, argue for a positive one (the *pœna sensus*). Over against this Arminian tendency, even with this softening and spirit of concession, the utterances of the divines at Dort were of the most decided kind. Infant reprobation, and the actual damnation of infants, were asserted in manifold shapes, and in all the public discussions of that body no Calvinist of any land uttered a word of doubt or of mitigation. There were points on which differences were expressed, there were feelings aroused which threatened the very continuance of the Synod, but there was a happy harmony in regard to infant reprobation.

THE SYNOD OF DORT ON THE BAPTISM OF PAGAN INFANTS. —At the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Sessions (Dec. 1, 3,

1619,) the question of the Baptism of the infants of heathen who came under Christian control was discussed. At the Twenty-first Session (Dec. 5) it was determined: "that they should by no means (*nullo modo*) be baptized before they attained years of discretion." *

THE OFFICIAL JUDGMENT SET FORTH BY THE ARMINIANS AT DORT.—At the Twenty-third Session, Dec. 23, 1619, the Sententia, or Official Judgment on Predestination signed by all the Remonstrant divines present, was read by Episcopius. Two articles in it ran thus;

IX.: "*All* the children of the faithful are sanctified in Christ, so that *not one* of them, dying before the use of reason, perishes; *in no wise*, on the contrary, are even *some* of the children of the faithful, dying in infancy, before any sin of act (*actuale*) committed in their own person, to be counted in the number of the reprobate, so that neither the holy laver of Baptism, nor the prayers of the Church can in any way profit them to salvation."

How sharp and clear is the antithesis. The Calvinists hold that *some* of the infants of the faithful, to wit, the elect children, are sanctified; the Arminians declare that *all* are; the Calvinists hold that *some* infants of the faithful perish; the Arminians declare that *none* do; the Calvinists taught that there were infants, to wit, reprobate infants, to whom neither Baptism nor the prayers of the Church brought saving blessing. The Arminians declare that there is no such class of infants.

But the Arminians saw that the constant hypothecating of the *death* of the *infants* left the vital centre of the question untouched. On the Calvinistic side such a hypothecating seemed to imply that the death of the infant in some influenced its election; whereas, in fact, on the Calvinistic theory the child's death has nothing to do with its election. An absolute election does not take into regard the death of the infant at all. If the *adult* life of the children of the elect shows, that many infants of the elect, who live, are among the reprobate, it equally shows, that many infants of the elect who die are among the

* Author Anon—qui interfuit Synodo. Given in Jäger, H. E. 1619, 314. Brandt, III. 37. In the Acta Synodi I. 49., the decision is given under Session XIX.

reprobate, for the two classes are exactly alike before an absolute decree. *All Calvinists*, even those of the gentle type of Dr. Hodge, are compelled to acknowledge that there are *non-elect or reprobate infants;* that is, that the non-elect or reprobate are such always; such though unborn; such at their birth; and through their whole infancy. Only the milder class hold, that such infants always grow up to the age of responsibility—no non-elect infants ever die, according to this new school of Calvinism. It has found out part of God's secret of fore-ordination. It is, that infant death is the seal of infant election; the death of the infant is the true sacrament of its adoption—Baptism is not. The Arminians met the fallacious hypothecating in their next article, which reads thus:

"*No children* of believers baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, while they are *living* in the state of infancy, are to be counted among those who have been reprobated by an absolute decree." *

It will be noticed, that the Arminians confine their statement to the "children of the *faithful*," but these, *when baptized*, *in no case*, equally if they *live*, as if they die, are to be counted among the reprobate. With the Word of God, with pure antiquity, and with an overwhelming majority of the Church of Christ in all ages, the Augustinian portion, no less heartily than the others, the Arminians, regarded Baptism in a light in which Calvinism completely anti-Augustinian here, cannot regard it, as the evidence in the infant of a present state of grace.

A recent writer † has praised Calvin for denying, that infants dying unbaptized are *ipso facto* lost. That was well in Calvin, so far, but that writer has failed to note that just in proportion as Calvin weakens the assumption that non-baptism proves that a child is lost, he weakens the faith that a baptized child is saved—that if non-baptism is no evidence of a child's damnation, baptism is no evidence of its salvation. Calvin's theory involves the certain damnation of the majority of the

* Acta Synodi, 113. Brandt, III. 84. † Lecky: Rationalism in Europe. Rev. Edit. New York, 1872, I. 307.

infants of the race, and does not claim that there is distinct evidence even in the most hopeful case that any particular child is saved. It does not widen the probability of infant salvation, as Lecky supposes, but narrows it. It does not exalt infant salvation, but simply lowers Baptism.

THE ARMINIAN CHALLENGE.—The Arminians urged an explicit reply: "It has been given out among the common people that we have . . falsely represented the doctrines of the Contra-remonstrants. . . If this be true, let them as plainly and flatly renounce those doctrines as we do."* "We especially (*unice*) desire to know from this venerable Synod, whether it acknowledges as its own doctrine and the doctrine of the Church, particularly (*nominatim*) what is asserted . . . concerning the creation of the larger part of mankind for destruction, the *reprobation of infants even though born of believing parents.*" †

So simple and direct a challenge could properly allow of but two answers. One would have been "the views of infant reprobation, you reject, we reject also." The other would have been, "the views you reject, we maintain." The answers at Dort all rest on the second position, and are expressed in far stronger terms than the Arminians had employed. They state the views from which the Arminians dissent.

DORT IS POLITIC.—There is, however, a marked difference between two classes of utterance in the Synod of Dort. Those that were meant for the great public are cautious and illusive in the framing. The truth was too palpable to be denied, nor did the men of Dort desire to deny it, but they wished to avoid the odium of unmitigated statement. On the contrary, the statements meant for the Synod itself, and for its theologians, are clear, sharp, and cruel.

Of the former class, is its First Canon :‡

"XVII. Inasmuch as we must judge of the will of God from His Word, which testifies that the children of the faithful are holy, not indeed by nature, but by benefit of the gracious covenant, wherein they,

* Acta, 119. Brandt, III. 190. † Acta, 121. Brandt, III. 93.

‡ Acta, 252. The Canons are given in Latin in Augusti. Corpus, Lib. Symb. Eccles. Reform. Elberfeld, 1827, 198-240. Niemeyer: Collect. Confess. Lipsiæ, 1840, 690-728. They are given in English in Hall's Harmony of Confessions. Lond. 1844, 539-573; in German in Beck's Sammlung Symb. Buecher. Neustadt. 1845, I. 344.

together with their parents, are comprised, *godly* parents ought not to doubt of the election and salvation of their children whom God calls out of this life in their infancy."

The impression produced by these words on a plain reader, divested of the key to their sense, is entirely illusive. He sees indeed that they imply that the infants of pagans, Jews and all non-Christians are lost; that they offer no hope to the infants of merely nominal Christians, and that within the Calvinistic Church itself they confine the hope to the children of the "faithful," of believers, of those "comprised within the gracious covenant," "the godly." They mean therefore that within the visible Church itself there is no hope in regard to the great mass of children. But the plain reader will perhaps need to be told that though we "*must* judge of the will of God from *His Word*," Calvinistic theology rests on a "will of God" which is not revealed in His Word, what the Westminster Confession (III. iv.) calls "the *secret* counsel and good pleasure of His will," and that this is the very will involved in the election of infants. The plain reader may need to be told that the "holiness of the children of the faithful, of which Dort speaks, is one which involves of necessity neither change of nature nor election, but exists equally in the cases in which the children of the faithful grow up into manifold reprobacy. If it meant more it would bring the Calvinistic system to the ground, for if *all* the children of believers are regenerate, all of them are elect; and as some of the children of believers die unregenerate, it would follow that some of the elect fell finally from grace, and with their fall, Calvinism itself would fall. It is the old theory over again—a presumption resting on a presumption, and begetting a presumption that some dying infants, nobody knows which, may be saved.

But the disingenuousness of Dort has gone yet further. After giving what it styles "the plain and simple explication of the Orthodox doctrine," it denounces certain allegations of the Remonstrants. One of the charges thus denounced is that Calvinists hold that "many innocent infants of believers are torn from the breasts of their mothers, and tyrannically plunged into hell."* The official paper of the Remonstrants.

* Acta, 275. Augusti: 239. Niemeyer, 722. Hall: 570. Beck: 393.

published in the acts of the Synod of Dort show that they did not make the charge that Calvinists held that "*many*" infants of believers are lost, but that they disavowed for themselves the doctrine that any are lost, and asked the Synod to express itself clearly on this point. The rhetorical flourish about "innocent infants torn from the breasts of their mothers," was not used by the Remonstrants at all before this Synod. When they used it they simply quoted Calvin. (See "Calvin against Castalio," already quoted).

The real meaning of the evasive words of Dort was at once pointed out by Episcopius as being this: "The reprobate infants of the faithful are not 'innocent,' but guilty, and God in casting them into hell, does not act 'tyrannically,' but exercises only the just rights of a ruler."*

DORT IS CANDID.—The official judgments of the theologians of the various States represented at Dort, fix with the greatest precision the meaning of its Canons, and of the various terms of Calvinistic orthodoxy.

The theologians of Great Britain, in addition to what we have quoted, say: "The thesis that there is no election of infants, in the sense that there is no election between one and the others, as if all were indiscriminately saved, is a hypothesis *without any foundation* whatever to rest on (*nec ullis fundamentis nititur*)." They quote with approval, and as authority, Prosper's words: "There is a distinction made in regard to infants by God's judgment; some are taken as heirs, and others passed by as debtors." † The Swiss theologians, ‡ the Bremen theologians, § as we have seen, wrote in the same vein, and need not be quoted a second time.

The Third Part of the Acts of the Synod of Dort embraces the judgments of the theologians of the provinces. We have given the judgment of the three Belgic Professors, ‖ and of Lubbert, and Lubbert signs the paper of the three, and the three sign the paper of Lubbert, as if they could not get enough of signing such delicious documents. We gave Lubbert's Thesis that "some are lost for original sin only." We add the sole proof, which he gives of the Thesis: "This Thesis is proved by the destruction (*interitus*) of *many infants* who die in infancy, out of the Church and out of Christ."—¶

We have also quoted Gomarus.** None of these judgments give an uncertain sound on infant damnation. But these are not all. THE DEPUTIES OF THE SYNOD OF SOUTH HOLLAND,†† mark the points very clearly: "*All infants are liable* (*obnoxius*) *to eternal damnation*, on account of original sin, and that *reprobation has a place in believers' children also*, who live to adult years, is clearly proved by Holy Scripture

* Examen Thesium. † Acta Judicia, 10. ‡ Do. 40, 44. § Do. 63.
‖ Acta, III. 10, 11. ¶ Do. 20. ** Do. 24, 26. †† Do. 39.

and experience. But whether this same (reprobation) has a place also in the infants of believers, who die in infancy, without actual sins, is a question which they (the Deputies) think is not too nicely (*curiose*) to be examined into; but inasmuch as there exist in Holy Scriptures, testimonies which take away from believing parents all occasion (*causam*) of doubting concerning the election and salvation of their infants, they think that these (testimonies) are to be *acquiesced* in." Here comes up again that appalling feature of the old Calvinism—we are to *acquiesce* in the *testimony* of the Word, though the secret counsel may make that testimony an illusion.

THE THEOLOGIANS FROM DRENTHE * are no less explicit: "We are now to speak of *infants, under which* (*sub quibus*) *we embrace also adults who have been insane from their birth* (*adultos mente ab exordio vitæ alienatos*), that is to say, of those infants who die in infancy. We give our judgment (*statuimus*) that the *infants of unbelievers, dying in infancy, are reprobate.* . . . The *infants of believers*, though they die in infancy, could justly be reprobated by God and left in their misery, if God willed to use His right. *Notwithstanding* (*interim*) *faithful* parents can conceive a sure *hope* (*certam spem possunt concipere*) concerning the salvation of such little infants (*infantorumi lorum*); for we do not read in Scripture that such were ever reprobated; on the contrary, the Scripture testifies of God's good affection to such"

The infants of the reprobates, dying in infancy, are reprobate, and those who are insane from their birth, are involved in the same principles. These men hold that a part of our race born in insanity, living in insanity, and dying in insanity, are damned, and to this view logical Calvinism can offer no reply.

§ 35. SEVERITY OF THE CALVINISTIC SPIRIT.

The terrible earnestness of the Calvinistic feeling against Arminianism, complicated and inflamed by political animosities, did not exhaust itself in theses, judgments, canons, condemnations and denunciations. The State was for the time a theocratic instrument of the divines. The Arminian congregations were forcibly scattered. They were forbidden to worship God in public. Their professors and pastors were deposed and banished. The banishment was so sudden that those at Dort were not allowed to return to their homes to bid farewell to their loved ones, or to arrange their private affairs. Grotius and

* Do. 91.

Hogerbeets were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment in the castle of Lovestein. Over the dead body of Ledenberg, who had committed suicide to avoid, as it was thought, the terrors of the rack (Sept. 28, 1618) sentence was pronounced May 15, 1619; the body was drawn upon a sledge to the gibbet and hung upon it. The aged statesman and patriot, Olden Barneveldt, one of the founders of the civil liberty of Holland, was beheaded. The awful severity of the character of God, as the Calvinistic system construed it, reflected itself in their conduct toward those whom they regarded as His enemies; the system which held that a babe unborn might justly be subject to eternal pains "without remedy," would not spare the blow which prostrated the men who made battle against the system which involved these views, which Calvinists of that day cherished as the very truth of God.

§ 36. THE CONFESSION AND APOLOGY OF THE ARMINIANS AND THE CALVINISTIC CENSURE.

The "Confession" of the Remonstrants, written 1621, by Episcopius, appeared in 1622. It was answered by four of the Leyden Professors, in a "Censure." The "Censure" drew forth a defence (Apologia) of the Confession from the pen of Episcopius. The Arminian Confession says: "God has prepared in His beloved Son a free remedy for all." To this the Censure replies: "If they mean this, even of all them who *die without actual sin of their* own, we see not how they can deny that they are Pelagians."

In their reply to this the Remonstrants say: "This passage shows that our adversaries believe that *absolute reprobation* pertains not only to the infants of the Gentiles, but is to be extended to the infants of those who are in the covenant, and believers; and, however they may wish to seem in any case to think contrary to this, that is to be understood only of the judgment of charity, not of faith."*

THE APOLOGY OF THE ARMINIANS in another passage states

* Apologia pro Confessione—contra Censuram, 1630, 4to, 87, 6. (It is significant that neither the name of the printer nor of the place of publication is given.)

the position of the Calvinists as conveyed in this question: "Why shall it be thought absurd or wicked to say, that God not only wills of His good pleasure to destroy, but also to devote to the inner torments of hell the larger part of the human race, many myriads of infants torn from their mothers' breasts? for these are the horrid inferences which the school of Calvin rears on those foundations, which consequently the Remonstrants look upon with their whole soul full of aversion and abhorrence."*

The Apology of the Arminians was answered by Trigland (1652-1705) in his Antapologia.†

§ 37. THE GREAT CALVINISTIC DIVINES AGAINST THE ARMINIANS.

The great masters in polemic not only grant that Calvinism held the damnation of infants, but strive to overwhelm and defeat Arminianism for not holding the doctrine.

CLOPPENBURGH: "This dispute has drawn into the question in regard to *infants dying in infancy;* although the Remonstrants themselves do not dare to put into heaven the infants born outside the covenant of grace, of heathen and unbelieving parents, nor to admit them to the communion of grace and glory: because the Apostle too clearly pronounces that they are 'unclean' children. 1 *Cor.* vii. 14." ‡

"Election embraces all the non-reprobates, whether adults or infants: and it is an *impious exception* of the Remonstrants, who exempt the *infants* of the heathen from being subjects of reprobation * * * and prefer to put on an equality the *infants* of unbelieving heathen and of believing Christians." § "The nature of a gracious covenant is destroyed, when the infants of the heathen are put upon an equality with the infants of faithful Christians. They (the Remonstrants) themselves admit that the infants of heathen are left by God in a condition of nature, deprived of the good of grace and glory, to be condemned, at least to that eternal death which they define as the '*penalty of loss* (*pœna damni*).'"

Here, as in other cases, Calvinism asserts a positive damnation of eternal pain for heathen infants, over against the modified and negative loss which Arminianism conceded.

THE DEAF AND DUMB AND INSANE.—But the ingenuity of

* 57, 6. † *Mastricht: Theor. Pract. Theol. Trajecti ad Rhen.* 1725, p. 1069. Walch: Bibl. Theol. Select. I. 428; II. 549, 550.

‡ Exerc. Sup. Loc. Comm. Theolog. Franck, 1653. De. Elec. grat. 1, § 24.

§ De. Locus de electione. Dispu'at. II.

these terrible old logicians has not exhausted itself, with the mystery which puts the immensely larger part of infants into the ranks of the reprobate and damned. They go to a hapless part of the race, whose condition even beyond that of infants touches the heart with the saddest pathos. Cloppenburgh* further makes the charge against the Remonstrants:

"They also exempt *without exception*, all *deaf and dumb persons*, and the *insane*. (*Surdos atque Amentes*).

"For experience shows a distinction between one class of the deaf and dumb, who by signs and pious works manifest (*spirant*) an inward devotion, and another class, in whom sin reveals itself, reigning through the works of the flesh. * * These latter we believe are left dead in sins, under just damnation, through the law of nature."

It is well for the reader to recall the fact that when Cloppenburgh wrote, the possibility of reaching those born deaf, with the Word, was almost unknown. A few isolated attempts had succeeded in the long ages, but their success was regarded as miraculous, or treated as a fable, and whether as miracle or fable, soon forgotten. Jerome Cardan (1501—1576) had asserted the *possibility* of teaching the deaf and dumb. To Pedro Ponce, a Benedictine monk of Spain, belongs the honor of first attempting to actualize the possibility; to Juan Paulo Boret, another monk of the same order, belongs the honor of publishing the first book (1620) on the subject. Cloppenburgh's argument (1592—1652) implies that he knew nothing of this possibility.

Of the idiotic, insane, and mad, he says, "a distinction is to be made. There are those whom an evil conscience and reprobate mind, by God's just judgment, drives to madness, like mad dogs (*ut canes rabiosos*); who, unless God heals them, cannot be counted with the non-reprobate."

MOLINÆUS AGAINST THE ARMINIANS.—PETER MOLINÆUS (Dumoulin) 1568—1658, was one of the greatest divines of the French Calvinistic Church, and was deputed to attend the Synod of Dort. The prohibition of Louis XIII. prevented his attendance, but did not prevent his promulgating and defending the decrees of the Synod, and obtaining for them the sanction of the National Synods of Calvinistic France. In the theological chair at Sedan, he was the great opponent of Amyraud

* Locus de Electione. Disputat. II.

and the other professors of Saumur, who were charged with a kind of Semi-Arminianism. He has been regarded as "one of the greatest writers and the first polemic of his age." In his Dissection of Arminianism,* he opens with a defence of God's dealings with man, thoroughly characteristic of old Calvinism.

"If any one were to crush an ant with his foot, no one could charge him with injustice, though the ant never offended him, though he did not give life to the ant, though the ant belonged to another, and no restitution could be made, and though between the ant and man the inequality is not infinite, but a certain and finite proportion."

In all these aspects, he argues, the case is stronger for God, "if He should harden sinful men whom He might save." "The offspring of the pious and faithful are born with the infection of original sin."† "As the eggs of the asp are deservedly crushed, and serpents just born are deservedly killed, though they have not yet poisoned any one with their bite, so infants are justly obnoxious to penalties."‡ Molinæus answers the Arminian position that Christ by His death obtained reconciliation for all, by objecting that it would then follow "that all infants born outside of the covenant are reconciled, and have their sins forgiven, and that hence no greater blessing could be conferred on them than the merciful cruelty of cutting their throats in their cradles, (*quam si quis eos clementi crudelitate in cunis jugulaverit*)."§ Molinæus' suggestion holds with equal force against Dr. Hodge's view that all dying infants are saved. The two together would imply that any man can make the election of an infant sure in the dreadful manner suggested in the bloody age in which Molinæus lived.

"*To him, whom God hates from the womb*, He does not give sufficient and saving grave. Hence there are those whom God rejects with a spiritual rejection, before they have done anything of good or evil. He does not therefore give them sufficient means to faith and salvation, for this cannot be harmonized with hatred." ‖

The same views of infant reprobation are pressed over against the Arminians, by Molinæus¶ in other places.

* Anatome Arminianismi. Lugduni Batav. 1621, 4to, p. 2. † Do., p. 35. ‡ P. 48. § P. 161. ‖ Do., 289. ¶ Thesaurus Sedanensis Genevæ, 1661. 2 Vols. 4to, I. 197.

BURMANN AGAINST THE ARMINIANS.

BURMANN.*—' The Remonstrants do evilly, who, though they do not *dare*, on account of 1 Cor. vii. 14, *to put them in heaven*, yet acknowledge no *reprobation of them*, * * but assign them rather a middle state and penalty of loss; as also other, both of the ancients and moderns, *grant heaven to them, in the face of* 1 Cor. vii. 14, and Rom. v. 14."

GUERTLER, AGAINST THE ARMINIANS.

GUERTLER (1654–1711) in arguing against the Arminians, says:

"Death comes even unto infants; *for without reason*, and *contrary* to *Paul's decision*, Episcopius exempts from the number of *those who are to be punished*, INFANTS and IDIOTS (*infantes et fatuos*)." †

That our readers may clearly see what it is that is condemned, we will quote the passage to which Guertler refers.

EPISCOPIUS: "The Scripture represents that misery (of death or damnation and sin) as universal, so as to involve the whole human race, that is all men and every man, to wit, in whom that misery can have just place as penalty. *Infants* therefore, as such, as also *idiots* (*fatuos*), the *insane*, the *mad* or *those destitute of the use of reason and free will* we are unwilling to comprehend in that number. . . . They are liberated from that death by special Divine grace." ‡

GUERTLER has been explicit enough, but he makes assurance doubly sure, by proceeding in the next paragraph to say:

"By 'death' is understood, death temporal and death eternal; and this latter is the unceasing (*perpetuus*) sense of dire tortures (*dirorum cruciatum*), inevitable to those who see not the face of God, so that the Scholastics, following Lombard, wrongly teach that *infants*, on account of sin, *pay the debt of loss only*, not of sense." The sentence of LOMBARD, which Guertler cites, is as follows: "Not, therefore, for the actual sins of their own parents, nor even for the actual sins of the first parent, but for original (sin) which is derived from the parents, infants will be damned; hence *they will not endure the penalty, material fire, or that of* the worm of conscience, but will be deprived forever of the vision of God.' § This mitigation Guertler rejects, and closes the paragraph following, with the decisive words: "God hath ordained (Statuit), that we should be born corrupt, or that we should sin, because Adam hath sinned, and wills that we should die, because we sin "‖

* Synod. Theolog. Genev. 1678, I. 256. † Institut. Theolog. Amstelod. 1694, pp. 188, 189.

‡ Institut. Theolog. Lib. IV. Sect. V. ch. I. Opera Amstelod. 1650, p. 401.

§ LOMBARD, Sentat. L. II. Dist. 33, I, E. ‖ See also Guertler do. do., p. 202, and the citations he gives from the Remonstrant's Confessions.

§ 38. THE ARMINIANS AGAINST THE CALVINISTS.

The Arminian defenses constantly urge against the Calvinists their doctrine of infant reprobation. It is one, they say, of which Calvinists make no secret, so far as the children of the non-elect, pagan or Christian, are concerned, and which the candid allow involves that some children even of the elect are lost.

EPISCOPIUS.—"Those who believe that absolute election and absolute reprobation pertain to infants dying in infancy, whether they be Gentiles or children of those who are in the covenant—to them the uncertainty (whether they shall grieve or rejoice over the death of their *children) is very mournful*, for the fear of reprobation far outweighs the hope of election, since the number of the reprobate is far greater than that of the elect: hence it is clear that an unutterable grief may readily arise from such a death."*

GROTIUS shows that in certain aspects the Calvinists departed as completely from the "Catholic faith," in regard to infants, as the Pelagians did in others. If the Calvinists did not hold, with Augustine, that unbaptized infants are lost, neither did they hold, as Augustine did most tenaciously, that all baptized infants are certainly saved. He states the Calvinistic doctrine thus: "That some infants, dying in infancy, and who, as children of believers and baptized, are delivered to the torments of hell on account of original sin."†

"Calvin says that of those who have rested on the breasts of the same Christian mother some are borne to heaven, others thrust down to hell, without respect to their having or failing to have Baptism: to wit, by virtue of that decree, by which God hath decreed, not by permitting only, but also by willing, that Adam should necessarily fall, and that so many nations, with their infant children, *should through that fall* be brought to eternal death without remedy. When Calvin himself calls this decree 'fearful' (*horribile*), he gives it too soft a name (*minus quam res est dixit*)"‡

LIMBORCH (d. 1712).—"The Contra-remonstrants (the Calvinists) teach that original sin merits the eternal punishment of sense, or the eternal torments of the fire of hell, so that many infants dying in infancy are to be tortured forever in the fire of hell. Thus in common

* Responsio ad LXIV. Quæst. 35. † Disquisitio de dogmat. Pelagian. Opera, Londini, 1689, IV. 376. ‡ Rivet. Apologet. Discuss. Opera, IV. 684.

(*communiter*) the Contra remonstrant divines teach concerning the children of unbelievers who die in infancy. As regards the children of believers they do not openly set forth their judgment. Some say in express words, that the distinction of election and reprobation exists in their case also, and, therefore, some children of believers, dying in infancy, are to be cast into hell. Such is the view of Pareus, Zanchius, Perkins, and Donteklok. Arthur Hildersham, also on Psalm I. Lect. 55, says: "It is clear that God hath declared His wrath against the sins of infants by pursuing with His hatred *not their sins only, but also their persons*, (*non tantum . . ipsorum peccata sed et personas*,) Rom. ix. 11, 13, nor merely by inflicting on them corporeal penalties, but also by casting them into hell. And to put beyond all doubt that he is speaking of the children of believers, in speaking, on Rom. ix., of the children of believers, he says: 'It is a damnable error that all who die in infancy shall certainly obtain the heavenly heritage; on the contrary, he (Paul) decides that *many infants are vessels of wrath and firebrands* of hell (*titiones inferni*).' Others, not daring to confess this openly, cover the hideousness (*fœditatem*) of their position with ambiguous words, by saying that we, in accordance with God's revealed will, expressed in this formula of the divine covenant, and in accordance with the judgment of charity, ought to regard as elect all the children of believers, as embraced in the same covenant with their parents. But as they hold that the secret will of God is often contrary to His revealed will, and that we are obliged sometimes to believe, according to the revealed will, what is false according to the secret will: and as many according to the judgment of charity are to be esteemed elect, who are in fact not elect, it is evident that there is here no certitude of faith, and that they have devised this, only to disguise their opinion, whose hideousness they desire, as far as they can, to conceal."*

§ 39. THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY. (1643—45.)

But perhaps the Westminster Assembly, which embraced in its Confession the particular type of Calvinism to which Dr. Hodge is bound, and of which he is, indisputably, one of the noblest representatives—perhaps this Assembly may have been marked by special mildness—and mitigating its logic by its gentleness, may have qualified the rigor of the older view? Such a supposition could only be made in ignorance and in irony. The Calvinism of the Westminster Assembly was in no respect milder than that of the Synod of Dort. Its pro-

* Theologia Christiana. Amsterdam, 1700. Lib. III. Ch. V. iii. p. 187.

locutor, Dr. Twiss, Dr. Thomas Goodwin, one of its very greatest members, and others, were of the extremest Supralapsarian school, that school of which distinguished Calvinists of a milder type have spoken so severely. Thomas Case, one of its most esteemed members, was so zealous for religion, as he understood it, that in a sermon before the Court Martial, 1644, he said: "Noble sirs, imitate God, and be merciful to none that have sinned of malicious wickedness," meaning the Royalists.*

Dr. Philip Schaff says of the Westminster Assembly: "The Presbyterians were opponents of all tolerance, and were as urgent for a general uniformity as the Episcopalians had been under Elizabeth and Charles II. They regarded freedom of conscience and tolerance as culpable indifference and treason toward revealed truth."† The writings of the Westminster divines, and of all the earlier school which followed in their footsteps, sustain the sense we have given to the Westminster Confession in regard to infant damnation. These writings are in English and easy of access, and we need not therefore swell our testimonies with them. The meaning of a Confession when it is made, remains its meaning forever—and hence the vital importance of the earliest writers, the authors of Confessions, and the original interpreters, expounders, and defenders of them. It is the meaning these writers put upon the Calvinistic Confessions, not one imagined by ourselves, which we have given them; and on the express language of the Confessions, and of these witnesses, we rest our case. C. P. K.

* Neal's History of the Puritans, ii. 307.

† Hertzog: Art. Westminster Synods, Vol. XVIII. 56.