

## Predestination

### A. A. Hodge

A.A. Hodge (1823-1886), Professor in Systematic Theology at Princeton Seminary from 1877 until his death in 1886, urged that the aim of every Christian teacher should be to produce a vitalizing impression — giving students ‘theology, exposition, demonstration, orthodoxy, learning, but giving all this to them warm.’ ‘He taught the knowledge of God,’ said one of his hearers, ‘with the learning of a scholar and the enthusiasm of a loving Christian’. These qualities not only crowded his classrooms, they also led to frequent appeals for the delivery of popular lectures. The one presented here is one of nineteen lectures delivered in Philadelphia early in 1886. The whole of them has been published in one volume, *Evangelical Theology: Lectures on Doctrine* by the Banner of Truth Trust.

THIS is a subject which is very little understood, even by those Christians who profess to embrace it in their creed. This is due in part to the nature of the subject, to its profundity, and to the infinite range of its complications with other important truths. But it is also in large measure due to inattention, and to the general prevalence of a natural though unfounded and ignorant prejudice. This prejudice has become in many quarters an epidemic irresistible to persons of more zeal than judgment. Now, I wish to urge a plea in favour of an earnest, frank, patient study of the subject. Vague prejudice unsupported by definite knowledge has no value. It is unquestionable that the Scriptures do teach some doctrine of predestination, and a very strict doctrine of unconditional election has been held by the greatest and most thoroughly biblical theologians, and by whole denominations of Christians most conspicuous for their evangelical character and fruitfulness. It will not do for any of us to dismiss such a subject with supercilious impatience. We should at the very least do our best to secure a clear conception of the doctrine, and of its relation to other doctrines, before we make ourselves sure that it is not true.

I. In the first place, it should be clearly understood that this great principle of divine predestination is held in two entirely different connections and interests. It has by a great many been discussed simply as a question of transcendental theology, as concerning the acts of God enacted in eternity in a sphere above and behind the external phenomena which are obvious to our senses. If there be a God, he necessarily exists in eternity, while the creation exists in the successions and limitations of time. The universe as a whole and all the parts of it originate in him and depend upon him, and therefore are determined by him. According to the precise language of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Ques.

7, "The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." This sweeps the whole universe, and is a proposition of the highest and most general speculative importance. This position is unquestionably, in this form, true and logically involved in all scriptural views of the doctrine of grace in all its elements. It is therefore rightly embraced in our Confession of Faith, and the present writer with all his heart believes it to be true. It is in this spirit and from this speculative point of view that Zwingli discusses this subject in his *De Providentia*. And it is this aspect of the question which is habitually considered by the general Christian public in their hostile criticisms of this doctrine. Now, I am perfectly free to confess that however true this view of the general principle of predestination is, and however much it is logically implicated in the essentials of the Christian doctrines of grace, nevertheless this transcendental way of conceiving of the matter is more speculative than practical. Although I heartily accord with the view in my own mind, I feel no disposition to insist upon the assent of any Christian brother as a matter of loyalty to the Christian faith. No element of the Creed is essential unless it practically determines the attitude of the soul in its relations to God through Christ. And only those aspects and modes of conceiving Christian truth should be insisted upon and imposed upon others as obligatory which do directly determine this Godward attitude of our souls, or, in other words, which directly enter into and give form to our religious experience.

On the other hand, Calvin presents his characteristic doctrine of eternal election in living connection with the great practical experimental questions of personal salvation and of divine grace. If we are sinners, it is evident that the practically essential thing in religious experience is to appreciate truly our guilt, unworthiness, and helplessness before God, and God's free grace toward us to its full extent. If God is infinitely gracious and just, if at measureless expense he redeemed us at the cost of the pain, shame, and death of his Son, it follows that any failure in our appreciation of our own unworthiness and helplessness, or of God's gracious activity in our salvation, would be absolutely insufferable. To claim more for ourselves or to ascribe less to God than the facts of the case justify would be the greatest of all sins, and would be the very thing to make salvation impossible. The sense of our own guilt, pollution, and impotence, and of the absolute unconditioned freeness of the grace which saves us, is involved in every case of genuine religious experience.

The expiatory work of Christ which is sufficient for, adapted to, and freely offered to all men, being presupposed, the question of questions is, How — by what agencies and on what conditions — is it effectually applied to any individual? The Scriptures make it plain that the condition of its effectual application is an act of faith, involving real spiritual repentance and the turning from sin and the acceptance and self-appropriation of Christ and of his redemption as the only remedy. But what will prompt a sinner in love with his sin, spiritually blind and callous, thus to repent and accept Christ as the cure of the sin he loves? The first movement cannot begin with man. The sinner of himself cannot really desire

deliverance from sin; of himself he cannot appreciate the attractive beauty, loveliness, or saving power of Christ. The dead man cannot spontaneously originate his own quickening, nor the creature his own creating, nor the infant his own begetting. Whatever man may do after regeneration, the first quickening of the dead must originate in the first instance with God. All Christians feel this as the most intimate conviction of their souls. Yet it involves necessarily this very doctrine of eternal predestination or election. If God begins the work, if our believing follows his quickening, then it is God, not man, who makes the difference between the quickened and the unquickened. If we believe, it is because we have been first quickened. If any man does not believe, it is because he is yet dead in his natural sin. God's eternal choice therefore cannot depend upon foreseen faith, but, on the contrary, faith must depend upon God's eternal choice.

As between the man who believes in Christ and the man who finally rejects him, the source of the difference is put by the Pelagian entirely in the inalienable, unassisted power of the human will. All that can be said in the case is that the one man has accepted Christ because he chose to do so, and the other man has rejected Christ because he chose to do so. Each has acted as he has done in the unfettered and unfetterable exercise of the human will. But Pelagianism makes no room for original sin nor for the necessity of divine grace. It is diametrically opposed to the Scriptures, to the religious experience of all Christians, and it has been rejected as anti-Christian by the unanimous consent of the whole historic Church.

The semi-Pelagian, admitting that man is morally sick, holds that every sinner must make the first movement Godward spontaneously in his own strength, after which, if his effort is sincere, however ineffectual, God will co-operate by his grace with him and make his effort successful. The Arminian, on the other hand, admitting that all men, being dead in trespasses and sins, are absolutely incapable of spontaneously originating any good desire or effort, yet holds that God gives the same sufficient grace to all men; and he makes the difference between the believer and the unbeliever to lie in the fact that the former co-operates, and thus renders the grace in his case effectual, and the other fails to co-operate with it, and thus renders it ineffectual. The Lutheran, who maintains that men are in such sense dead in sin that they are utterly unable to co-operate with grace before they have been themselves quickened to life by grace, yet makes the difference between the believer and the unbeliever to consist in the fact, that while no man can co-operate with grace previous to regeneration, every man is free to resist it. With the Lutheran, therefore, the believer is the non-resistant, the unbeliever is the resistant, subject of a common universal grace. The Calvinist, on the other hand, glorifies the free and sovereign grace of God by attributing to it alone all the efficiency in saving the believing sinner. It is God's grace which makes the believer all he is. He feels this; of this at least he is absolutely sure. He is nothing more than a poor wandering sheep. The Good Shepherd has sought him out, found him, and carried him back on his breast. In

himself and of himself in his entire history he is no better than his fellowmen who are lost. It is only God's free grace, therefore, which has made the difference. The faith he has cannot have been the precondition of God's choice, but God's choice must have been the precedent cause of his faith.

In this form of the doctrine, we did not first choose him, but he first chose us. This truth enters into all genuine Christian experience. It is of the essence of the universal Christian sentiment. It finds its expression in the sacred hymns and in the prayers of our fellow-Christians who call themselves Arminians, as it does in the prayers and hymns of those commonly styled Calvinists. All alike wrestle in prayer as if God's grace determined the decision. All alike cry, "Make them willing, O God, in the day of thy power!" It is the common confession of all alike that it is God who in all things works in us to do, by "working in us to will, of his good pleasure." All alike ascribe to him the prerogative of turning the hearts of men even as rivers of water are turned. All Christians with one voice cry, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." In the theology of the heart all Christians are Calvinists — that is, all Christians ascribe all their salvation unto God. And this is the only form in which the doctrine of sovereign predestination should be insisted upon as of vital religious interest.

II. The real question remains, What does the Word of God say upon the subject? In all matters of controversy between Christians the Scriptures constitute the single court of last resort. This is an historical principle. To-day it remains as true as ever, no matter what crude theories of inspiration some parties may proclaim. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have been for eighteen centuries, are to-day, and always will remain, the only common authority of Christendom, acknowledged by all alike.

These Scriptures do certainly teach a divine election of persons and foreordination of events. This fact all educated persons acknowledge. The only controversy among Christians relates to the range of the foreordination, whether it comprehends all events or is limited to certain classes; and to the subjects, the objects, and the conditions of the election which the Scriptures teach.

1st. All Christians of course admit that the eternal Creator of the world, in the very act of creation, intelligently comprehending the end from the beginning, really, immutably, and unconditionally determined all classes of events subsequently brought about by the necessary sequences of natural forces and laws. As far as the universe is a machine, God, in bringing it into being, and in implanting its forces, and in ordaining its laws, necessarily determined all movements of the machine and its results from the beginning to the end. But there has been a natural shrinking from attributing to the foreordination of God all the free acts of men and angels, and especially the sinful acts of men and devils.

Nevertheless, the Scriptures are very explicit upon these points. (1.) The foreordination of God does include the free actions of men and angels, as it does all other classes of events whatsoever. God works in man freely and spontaneously *to will* according to his good pleasure (Phil. ii. 13). Men and nations are the mere instruments (the axe, saw, rod) in the hand of God to do his will (Isa. x. 15). God definitely predicts the free actions of men ages before the men themselves exist (Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1-4). All prophecy implies foreknowledge; and all foreknowledge on the part of a God who has intelligently and of purpose created all things out of nothing, of course implies the foreordination of all the foreseen results of that creation. If even one so limited in knowledge and power as you or I should place in the hands of a dependant a horse that we certainly knew would run away on that road and in the hands of that man, beyond question we would predetermine that runaway and all of its foreseen results. (2.) The Scriptures go even further, and declare that even the sinful acts of men are foreordained by God. This does not mean that God regards the wicked acts with complacency, or that he will condone them, or that we are in any degree excusable for acting them, much less that God is their author or cause, directly or indirectly. It means, simply, that these wicked actions were a clearly foreknown part of a system of things which God freely chose, and the future existence of which he freely and righteously determined for good and sufficient reasons, the evil never being ordained as an end in itself, but always as a means to an infinitely greater and better end. Thus, in the history of Joseph (compare Gen. xxxvii. 28 with Gen. xlv. 7, 8; I. 20), Joseph said to his treacherous brethren who sold him into slavery, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God ;" "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." (Ps. xvii. 13, 14, and Isa. x. 5—15.) The greatest crime ever committed in the universe was the crucifixion of the Son of God. To accomplish this, Gentiles and Jews in vast numbers and of all classes freely conspired. Yet their wicked act was "determined beforehand to be done" by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts iv. 27, 28 ; xiii. 29 1 Pet. ii. 8; Jude iv.; Rev. xvii. 17).

2nd. As to the doctrine of election, and of the confessedly various "elections" which are asserted in Scripture, there have been very different opinions held among Christians. Those who lay emphasis upon what has been entitled the "theory of national election," as eminently the late Archbishop Sumner, maintain that the only election taught in Scripture concerning human salvation consists in the divine predestination of communities and nations to the knowledge of the true religion, and to the external privileges of the gospel. This form of election is an unquestionable biblical fact, and has been pre-eminently illustrated in the people

of Israel, in the ancient world, and in the great English-speaking nations of modern times.

Those who, like Mr. Stanley Faber and Archbishop Whately, emphasize what they call the "theory of ecclesiastical individualism," hold that the only personal election taught in the Bible respects the election of individual men to membership in the external Church and the means of grace. This also is an unquestionable scriptural fact, realized in the experience of all the members of the Christian community.

Both these types of election, both of nations and of individuals, to the external means of grace are obviously sovereign and unconditioned. Both men and nations are born to these privileges, irrespective of any previous merits or actions of their own. And as to these forms of God's sovereign election, there is no difference of opinion between Arminians and Calvinists or other Christians of whatever name.

But students of the Scriptures see that they do moreover teach explicitly that God does elect some individuals to eternal blessedness and to all the means thereof. Here the precise point of difference between Arminians and Calvinists comes in. The old Arminian statement was that God graciously elected the class of believers to everlasting life, and that if any individual man was included in the election it was because he was included in the class of believers. The more modern Arminian statement is to the same effect; in other words, that God elected certain individuals to eternal life, on the ground of their faith as foreseen by him. But the question necessarily arises, Where did these individuals come by their faith? If they got the faith of themselves, then their salvation is not entirely of grace and of God. If God gave them their faith, then it was in his purpose; and if it was embraced in his purpose, it could not have been the condition on which it was suspended. But the Scriptures and Christian experience unite in affirming that "faith is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8; Acts v. 31; 1 Cor. iv. 7). The designed effect of this eternal election is "that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love" (Eph. i. 4; ii. 10; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2), and therefore that holy state could not have been the foreseen condition of his choice. The very gist of the election is that of the children who "neither had done good or evil," "that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." God chose one and rejected the other. The very gist was that "the potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour" (Rom. ix. 11-21). The order in which the Holy Spirit puts the matter is very clear: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts xiii. 48). It was the personal foreordination to eternal life which determined the believing, and not the foreseen believing which conditioned the foreordination.

The true comprehensive statement of the scriptural teaching as to election includes all those just stated. The purpose of God is sovereign, absolute, and all-comprehensive, relating to all classes of events whatsoever. All nations and

communities and individuals have been predestined precisely to all the relations and means of grace they experience, and to all the results thereof. But besides this, the Scriptures explicitly teach an election (a) of individuals (b) to salvation, and to all the means and conditions thereof, (c) founded, not upon the foreseen faith of the persons elected, but upon the infinitely wise and sovereign purpose of God alone (Eph. i. 5-11; 2 Tim. i. 9; John xv. 16-19; Matt. xi. 25, 26; Rom. ix. 10-18).

III. The difficulty which all feel in attempting to receive this unquestionable truth of revelation, and assimilate it to the whole mass of our own thinking, respects (1) the freedom and responsibility of man, and (2) the holiness of God. How can man be free if from eternity all his actions have been certainly determined? And if God by his decree makes the future occurrence of each sin absolutely certain, how can he be holy? These combinations doubtless present puzzles of considerable difficulty to our minds in their present state of enlightenment. But these do not in any degree differ from a large class of problems which the imperfection and narrowness of our knowledge prevent us from solving. God's decree, it is obvious, is not an immediate efficient cause which interferes with natural causes or which brings anything into being. It is simply an immanent plan or purpose in the divine mind which determines the certain occurrence of the events to which it relates. The same precisely is true with respect to the divine foreknowledge. All Christians believe that God eternally foreknows whatsoever shall be in the future. If his knowledge is real knowledge, it is certain; and if it is certain as knowledge, the events to which it relates must be certainly future. If the difficulty of reconciling certainty with the freedom of man or with the holiness of God does not move us to abandon his foreknowledge, it cannot be a rational motive for our denying the truth of his universal predestination. A God without foreknowledge would be only a blind force. Every argument which establishes theism on the evident teleology of the universe by equal cogency establishes the divine foreknowledge. Without the foreknowledge of God there would be no intelligent creation, no wise moral government, no ground for religious trust, no confidence for the future, no basis for either the prophecies or the promises of God. The foreknowledge admitted, there is no logical reason for excepting to his foreordination.

1st. As to the bearing of this doctrine upon the freedom of man's will. It must be remembered that uncertainty is never essential to liberty. The essence of liberty is that the free act shall be self-originated and self-directed. The self-determination of an undeveloped child is uncertain. It is swayed every moment by external influences; and in just that proportion the child's action is uncertain, and lacks the highest quality of moral freedom. But the choices of the educated and thoroughly developed man in his ripe maturity are far more certain both to himself and to others. He is not open to external influence or liable to internal whim or change; and exactly in that proportion does he rise to the highest level of moral freedom. He thoroughly understands himself and his permanent needs and wishes. His character is formed, and freedom is the genuine and adequate

expression of character. God's purposes and self-decisions are the most certain, and at the same time the most free, of any actions that are conceivable. A drifting boat at sea, swept hither and thither by the winds and waves, is an admirable type of action utterly devoid of freedom and of certainty. It has no self-control, and therefore its action is equally unfree and uncertain. But a great steamship, at the same time self-propelled and self-steered, is an admirable type both of freedom and of certainty. Its action is predetermined, foreseen, and may confidently be relied upon, because it is free — that is, in the intelligent will of its navigator, acting through its powerful machinery, it possesses in the highest degree self-control and intelligent self-direction.

The eternal foreordination of God, which determines at once the certainty and the freedom of man's free actions, can in no way interfere with man's freedom. The action is not free if it is determined from without, but it is free if determined from within a rational will. Now, this is precisely what God's foreordination of man's free action effects. The decree at the same time determines that man shall be a free agent, shall possess a certain character, shall be surrounded by a certain environment, shall be specifically solicited by certain external influences, shall he internally moved by certain spontaneous affections, shall deliberately canvass certain reasons, and shall freely make a certain choice. The man thus is, as far as a finite creature may be, entirely self-moved and self-determined, and therefore he is free. The fact that his act is also certain is, as we have seen, and as Richard Watson, the great theologian of the Wesleyan Arminians, admits, no ground of presumption that it is not also absolutely free.

2nd. As to the consistency of God's foreordination of sin with his holiness, we have nothing to say except to admit the mystery, and to affirm that there is no possible escape except in denying the fact either of the existence of God on the one hand, or of the existence of sin on the other. If the cause which produced the universe did not foresee the sin which the present system embraces, then that cause was a blind, unintelligent force, and not God. If he did foresee it, and notwithstanding proceeded to bring that system, involving these sins, into existence, then he made their occurrence certain; he foreordained them. God did with his eyes open choose, out of a myriad of other possible systems, this actual system involving sin. He nevertheless is holy. He hates, forbids, punishes, restrains, and overrules the sin for good. In the light of the cross of Christ, on which God lays upon his Son the penalty of human sin, in the light of the great white throne and of the Lamb which irradiates the eternal city, the mystery of the divine permission of sin loses its overwhelming force. We have no complete solution of the problem, and it is not to be expected in our present stage of education. But we do see the light underneath the curtain. We do possess pledges for the immaculate holiness of God, and for the future moral perfection of his realm, and for the moral vindication of his reign, which suffice for the perfect assurance of our faith.

IV. Everything depends, in all departments of human thought, upon the point of view. Every one knows that, when traversing the scenes of a great battle, what appears to be inextricable confusion to us while we are passing along the outskirts and through the lower grounds, falls into complete order and appears as clear as light when we overlook the whole field from the strategic centre from which the eye and mind of the fieldmarshal beheld and controlled the contest. We all know that the heavens continued through all past ages to be an insoluble riddle to all looking upon them from the exterior and shifting standpoint of the earth. The movements of the sun and moon and of the wandering planets could be reduced to no intelligible plan. But the moment that in imagination the great Copernicus transferred the point of view from the earth to the central sun, all the hosts of heaven fell into rank, and have ever since been seen to march onward in a symmetrical order absolutely divine. In the morning, if we look eastward over a vast landscape with the sun before us, we see all things obscurely on their shadowed side. But if we look from the same point eastward in the evening, with the sun behind us, we see all the objects contained in the vast panorama glorified on the sunlit side.

In like manner must it be with all men when looking over the vast reaches of Jehovah's plans or works from below. No matter how intellectual they may be personally, no matter how vast their knowledge otherwise, it is just a matter of course that, from their human, changing outlook, as they are themselves swept along in the current of events, the relations of all objects should be confused. And especially must the relation of the several parts to God be misconceived, seen as they are on their shadowed side.

But, on the contrary, if we take our mental stand at the centre, and from God's point of view look down upon the events of time from their common centre, with their eternal side illumined, as far as our vision goes we shall see then fall into perfect order, and especially will we discern their symmetrical relation as a whole to the Source from which they issue, and the presiding Authority by which they are marshalled on their way.

It is self-evident that if we look out at any time and from any point upon our environment, we must see things in the accidental relations in which they happen to group themselves along our line of vision as we sweep past on our course. We must also, by the same necessity, see things in partial groups detached from their surroundings. If we conceive of any one event being caused by any other single event, we are led to confusion, because all things that exist constitute one articulated system, and every event is determined not by one single antecedent cause, but by the whole system of things, the entire equilibrium of the universe, that precedes it. So if we conceive of God as absolutely foreordaining individual events disconnected from the entire system of causes, conditions, and consequents of which they form a part, we shall necessarily be embarrassed by contradictions. God could not certainly foreordain one event without foreordaining every event, without tearing the system to pieces and bringing utter confusion

into natural law and human thought. For instance, a chronometer is a whole consisting of many parts rigidly articulated and exquisitely adjusted to each other. It would, evidently, be impossible for the most skilful mechanic to run his fingers into the plexus of the wheels and anti springs, with the intent of controlling the action of one part irrespective of the rest, without working confusion and ruin. Nevertheless, the chronometer as a whole, with all its contents freely working according to their law, undisturbed, may be lifted and carried round the world without changing the relation of interdependence of part on part. In like manner, if we will only make the effort to look upon the universe from God's point of view, as one all-comprehensive, complete system in itself, much of the apparent difficulty attending the principle of eternal predestination will disappear.

We can possibly conceive of the intelligence of God only so far forth as its laws are analogous to those of the intellect of man. We can only think of his mind as eternally teeming with all possible systems, embracing all possible creatures, grouped in all possible relations, and subject to all possible laws. By the "possible" we mean every existence that can be under the limits of God's infinitely wise and righteous nature. Out of all possible systems as wholes God chose the existing system of the universe, including all existence, spiritual and material, that has been, is, or will be, constituted as it is, with all its parts mutually interdependent as they are, as one whole. Viewed in this way, there is no conflict. The cause produces its effects, the event depends on its conditions; necessary agents act according to their nature, and free agents exercise spontaneously their perfect freedom: all the parts of the system act according to their several kinds; nevertheless, the system as a whole, including all its parts, has been from eternity made certain by the sovereign choice of God.

The point of view from which all difficulty disappears is infinitely higher and commands infinitely wider reaches of thought than the point of view from which foreordination and free-will are seen to be inconsistent. The new theology, asserting the narrowness of the old, is discarding the foreordination of Jehovah as a worn-out figment of the schools discredited by the advanced culture of to-day. This is not the first time that the owls, mistaking the shadow of a passing eclipse for their native night, have prematurely hooted at the eagles, convinced that what is invisible to them cannot possibly exist.

V. It is often objected to the biblical doctrine of predestination that, however much it may be apparently supported by the language of Scripture, it is utterly antagonized by all established truth in every other department of human thought — by all the united testimonies of philosophy and science. This preposterous claim is loudly voiced, even by some of the professed advocates of progress in theology. But the facts are all absolutely to the contrary. So much is this the case, so universally do all the real governing currents of modern thought outside of Christian theology run in the direction of universal determinism, rather than in that of the admission of the indeterminate, the contingent, the spontaneous and free, that many of us who are the staunchest Calvinists feel that the need of the

hour is not to emphasize a foreordination, which no clear, comprehensive thinker doubts, but to unite with our Arminian brethren in putting all emphasis and concentrating all attention on the vital fact of human freedom. That our consciousness of personal freedom is reliable, that we in a true sense stand outside of the current of necessary causation and do truly originate and give direction to our own actions, is a principle fundamental to all morals and all religion. Its permanent vindication is the one only and effectual solvent of all pantheism and all materialism. So strong does the current set on all sides throughout the sphere of human speculation, in favour of the conviction of universal preordination, that we can afford to leave its vindication to others, while we support with our suffrages the neglected though essential counter-truth of the real freedom of the human soul.

All the philosophy and science of the century is deterministic. The great argument of Jonathan Edwards against the liberty of contingency and in favour of the liberty of certainty has been taken up and intensified by John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer to support the doctrine of necessity. The universally received scientific principle of continuity involves this principle of foreordination. The now almost universally prevalent scientific doctrine of evolution, in all its infinite variety of forms, and in every form alike, involves this principle of foreordination. The funniest reading accessible even in this humorous age is that in which a progressive theologian, committing himself everywhere to the evolution method, yet declares that the doctrine of divine foreordination is false because unscientific. All philosophies which are either materialistic in tendency or pantheistic or purely theistic necessarily involve the principle of foreordination.

Every conceivable philosophy must ultimately found the universe upon mechanism, chance, or upon personal intelligence and will. If mechanism be the ultimate self-existent principle out of which the universe is developed and operated, then fatalism is true. If chance be the ultimate principle, then accident, contingency, uncertainty must be in the method, and chaos the ultimate goal. If a personal, intelligent will be the ultimate principle, then Providence is the executive in time of an eternal purpose. All philosophies may be classified under these heads. All the possibilities of speculation must lie within these limits. Instead of our doctrine of foreordination being the same with the heathen doctrine of fate, it is its absolute opposite and only alternative. We are shut up to a choice between the two — either a fatalism which results from mechanical co-action, or a fatalism which results from a mindless and purposeless chance, or an all-controlling providence of a heavenly Father who, in the exercise of his own personal freedom, has made room for ours. All thinkers who understand themselves know that they run along one or other of these lines. The wiseacres who plead the authority of philosophy and science as inconsistent with the scriptural doctrine of predestination may be safely left to themselves. They will not be found to be dangerous enemies even behind our backs.

VI. Here, as everywhere else, there is essential truth on both sides of every controversy, and the real truth is time whole truth, its entire catholic body. Arminianism in the abstract as an historical scheme is a heresy, holding half the truth. Calvinism is an historical scheme which in its best representatives comprehends the whole truth with considerable completeness. But the case is essentially different when we come to consider the great co-existing bodies of Christian people calling themselves respectively Calvinists and Arminians. Each of these parties holds all essential truth, and therefore they hold actually very much the same truth. The Arminians think and speak very much like Calvinists when they come to talk with God in either the confession of sin or the supplication for grace. They both alike in that attitude recognize the sovereignty of God and the guilt and helplessness of men. Indeed, how could it be otherwise? What room is there for anything other than essential Calvinism on one's knees? On the other hand, the Calvinist thinks and speaks like the better class of Arminians when he addresses the consciences of men, and pleads with them, as free, responsible agents, to repent and believe in Christ. The difference between the best of either class is one of emphasis rather than of essential principle. Each is time complement of the other. Each is necessary to restrain, correct, and supply the one-sided strain of the other. They together give origin to the blended strain from which issues the perfect music which utters the perfect truth.

VII. It is now-a-days frequently predicted by men in high places that the distinctive doctrines of Calvinism are doomed. The future is uncertain; the role of prophet is unprofitable and unbecoming. But the history of the past stands fast. The doctrine of predestination, with its associated system of truths, has had a wonderful history. All world-movers have believed it surely and have taught it clearly — Paul, Augustine, all the Reformers without exception. During the eleven hundred years which elapsed from the time of Augustine to that of Luther, all the best of time schoolmen, all the great missionary movements, the revivals of true religion, the extension of popular education, and all great healthy political reforms, had their common inspiration in Augustinian theology. All time great national movements in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Britain in the era of the Reformation, and all the great national leaders, as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox, were distinctively Augustinian, and were rooted in predestination. The most moral people of all history, the Puritans, Pietists, Huguenots, Reformed Dutch of Holland and German of the Palatinate, and the Scotch and the Scotch-Irish of Ulster and the United States, were all Calvinists. Calvin, William of Orange, Cromwell, and the Presbyterian and Congregational founders of the government of the United States, and all the great creators of modern civil liberty, were Calvinists. All modern provision for universal education sprang from time Scotch parochial school and the New England college. The patriots, free-state makers, martyrs, missionaries of all the modern era, have been, in nine hundred and ninety-nine parts out of the thousand, distinctively Calvinist.

This history is glorious and secure past all contradiction. It is natural also — a natural outgrowth of consequences out of principles. Predestination exalts God, and abases man before God. It makes all men low before God, but high and strong before kings. It founds on a basis of eternal rock one absolute Sovereign, to whose will there is no limit, but it levels all other sovereigns in the dust. It renders Christ great, and the believing sinner infinitely secure in him. It establishes the highest conceivable standard of righteousness, and secures the operation of the most effective motives to obedience. It extinguishes fear, it makes victory certain, it inspires with enthusiasm, it makes both the heart and the arm strong. The Ironsides of Cromwell made the decree of predestination their base; hence they never lost a battle, and always began the swelling chorus of victory from the first moment that the ranks were formed. The man to whom in all the universe there is no God is an atheist. The man to whom God is distant, and to whom the influence of God is vague and uncertain, is an Arminian. But he who altogether lives and moves and has all his being in the immanent Jehovah is a Calvinist.

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