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Review of Dr. Tyler's Strictures



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REVIEW

OF

DR. TYLER'S STRICTURES

UPON AN ARTICLE IN THE

CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR,

ON THE

MEANS OF REGENERATION.

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REVIEW
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ON THE
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WE regret that Dr. Tyler should have prepared an answer to our remarks on the means of regeneration, before we had brought them to a close. The true intent and limitations of any principle under discussion, are usually laid open with the greatest clearness in those concluding statements, which are designed to obviate objections, and to present the subject in its practical results. Our readers will accordingly find, that most of the objections which Dr. Tyler has urged against our review, were met by anticipation in our closing number, and were shown to be founded in a misconception of the principles which we maintain. Seven "queries" particularly—intended to present in a single view, the "legitimate consequences" of our system—to each of which Dr. Tyler seems to have supposed we must reply in the affirmative, were answered in direct terms, or by necessary implication, in the negative; and that in perfect accordance, as we hope to show, with the whole tenor of our preceding remarks. As to our real sentiments, therefore, there was no longer any room for doubt. With these explanations in his hands, that Dr. Tyler should still go forward to publish his strictures in their original shape, and thus create in the minds of hundreds who will never see our review, the settled conviction that we maintain opinions which we have unequivocally disclaimed; has excited in our minds, we acknowledge, no small degree of surprise. His decision to go on under these circumstances, it seems, was formed in haste. Had a longer period

been allowed him for consideration, we are sure he would have decided otherwise. His well known candor would have led him rather to reconsider the subject in all its bearings, than to add an "appendix" for the purpose of justifying a construction of our language, which, whether natural or not, we had explicitly declared to be contrary to our intention, and abhorrent to our feelings.

Called upon unexpectedly to resume the discussion, under these circumstances, we enter upon it, in its present shape, with unmingled regret. Not that we suppose any of our readers will think we ought to remain silent, under the imputation of sentiments, which are diametrically opposed to our whole system of belief. But we lament the necessity of giving a personal or polemical aspect to the discussions of the *Christian Spectator*. Nothing can be farther from our wishes or intentions, as to the character of this work. If we are forced to do so, in the present instance, we may say with the great orator of antiquity, in a similar case, "he who has arraigned us before the tribunal of the public, is justly to be considered as the cause?" We enter upon our defense, however, with unaltered sentiments of kindness and respect for Dr. Tyler; and if we shall find occasion in the progress of these remarks, to turn back upon him the consequences of his own opinions, and to examine into the consistency of his own statements, we are confident he will acquit us of acting from any other motive than that of establishing the truth.

In proceeding to an examination of Dr. Tyler's "Strictures," it will be proper briefly to state the leading principles of the Review, which has given rise to his remarks. These may be reduced to three positions.

I. That no acts performed under the influence of the selfish principle, can be properly considered as a "using of the means of regeneration."

II. That still, as the renewed soul is begotten "with the word of truth," that truth must be perceived or *used* by the mind, as a means to the end in question, viz. to a change of spiritual affections.

III. That divine truth is never, in fact, thus used, by the sinner, until the identical moment when he submits to God—when the selfish principle ceases to predominate in the soul, and when God is chosen as the supreme good, from that simple desire for happiness, which is inherent in the constitution of all percipient beings. We added moreover, that we had no predilection for the *phrase*, "using the means of regeneration," as applied to this perception of divine truth, in the act of turning to God. We used it because it was used in the essay, on which our remarks were founded—because it has been the customary language on this subject. We were anxious, not for words

but for things—to expose on the one hand the error of considering the selfish strivings of the sinner, as a using of the means in question—and to show, on the other, that man is not passive in regeneration; but that he makes the proper and only justifiable use of truth in the act of obeying it, under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

To our first position, Dr. Tyler gives his unqualified assent; and unites with us in our opinion respecting “some inadvertences” on this subject, which we pointed out in the essay of Dr. Spring.

From our second position, he dissents in the most absolute terms; and declares, “that to represent sinners as using the means of regeneration, is an abuse of language—that it ought to be banished from the pulpit, and expunged from the system of theology.” p. 7. With all Dr. Tyler’s anxiety respecting a departure from received opinions, it is not a little extraordinary that he should thus array himself, at the very outset, against the great body of orthodox divines in this country and in Europe. Turn where we will, we find but one sentiment on this subject. Dr. Doddridge and Dr. Dwight, Dr. Griffin and Dr. Smalley, Dr. Strong and Dr. Spring, unite in maintaining that there are means of regeneration, and that sinners must use them in order to be saved. To the arguments of the Christian Spectator on this point, Dr. Tyler has attempted no direct reply. He contents himself with one brief statement, which seems to have had, in his mind, the force of absolute demonstration; and his reasoning unquestionably, if there is no error in it, not only convicts us, but a great body of orthodox divines, of having remained to this hour in the most serious error on this subject. We shall therefore

I. Examine the arguments by which Dr. Tyler endeavors to overthrow the generally received doctrine, that sinners use the means of regeneration.

To my mind, (says Dr. Tyler,) it is plain, that if sinners use the means of regeneration, they must use them with a holy heart, or an unholy heart, or no heart at all; that is, with right motives, or wrong motives, or no motive at all. If with right motives, the change is already effected, and the end precedes the means—If with wrong motives, their actions are sinful, and sin is the means of holiness—If with no motive at all, they act without any design, and cannot be using means for the accomplishment of an end. How then can this scheme be maintained, without first denying the entire depravity of the unrenewed heart, and thus striking at the foundation of the doctrines of grace? p. 8.

Now we readily concede, that sinners never use the means of regeneration with a holy heart, nor with an unholy, or sinful heart. But does it therefore follow, that they never use them with any heart *at all*? What is that *heart*, with which God in his law requires sinners to love him? Surely, not a heart which is holy be-

fore they love him. Still less with a sinful heart; and yet he requires them to love him with some heart, even *their* heart. Is this "no heart at all?" We think, on the contrary, it is a *real* heart; a heart with which sinners *can* love God, even without the grace of the Spirit, and certainly, with it. We venture to say, that this heart consists in those powers and properties of moral agency, which qualify its subject to exercise moral affections. With these powers or properties, sinners, we believe, may so use the truth of God, and the motives which it presents, that, through grace, the result shall be the exercise of holy affections—a holy heart; and that thus they do in fact "purify their souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit."

But the argument of Dr. Tyler may be thought more conclusive, when presented in the substituted phraseology, "with right motives, or wrong motives, or no motive at all." The word *motive* is here used in the sense of *intention* or *design*; for as Dr. Tyler says, "if with no motive at all, they act without *design*; and cannot be using means for the accomplishment of an end." Conceding then, that sinners cannot use the means of regeneration either with right or wrong motives, the question is, whether they cannot use them from an impulse of self-preservation—a simple desire for happiness, which is inherent in the constitution of every sentient being? This brings us at once to what we consider the turning point in the present discussion; viz. what is a free moral agent? What is he, aside from any choice, either right or wrong—what is he, considered *abstractly* from moral action? Is he not an agent, who *can*, i. e. who has *natural* ability so to use truth as to obey it? But how? Not with right or with wrong motives; i. e. not with good or with bad moral intention; for this would imply moral action *before* moral action. Can he choose "with no motive at all?" This Dr. Tyler justly considers as impossible. It follows therefore, (for Dr. Tyler admits the sinner's *natural* ability to do his duty,) that a moral agent can so use the truth as to obey it, with motives which are neither right nor wrong, i. e. from the simple impulse of his desire of good, or happiness. If it should be said that the sinner, though a free moral agent, is the subject of a *moral* inability; then we ask, what is a moral inability? Is it an inability which involves the want of any one of the powers or properties of a moral agent? If so, then it is a *natural* inability, and the distinction between natural and moral inability, is after all a distinction in words, and not in things. On the other hand, if a moral inability does not involve the want of any of the powers or properties of moral agency, then the sinner is, in respect to these powers, fully and perfectly able to perform his duty, or so to use the truth of God as to obey it.

We say then, that Dr. Tyler's argument subverts the laws of moral agency, and of course the foundation of human accountabil-

ity. It rests on a triplet of physical impossibilities. The first is, that a sinner should use the means of regeneration, or conversion, with right i.e. holy motives; which involves this impossibility, that a sinner should be holy *before* he is holy. This of course is a physical impossibility. The second is, that of using these means with sinful motives; which involves another impossibility, viz. that *abusing* these means, should be using them; or as Dr. Tyler states it, that "sin should be the means of holiness." This is also a physical impossibility. The third is, that sinners should use these means with no motive at all; which is also a physical impossibility. According to this argument, then, one of these impossible things must take place, or the sinner never can use the means of regeneration. It follows therefore, that there are three *physical impossibilities*, that he should ever so use divine truth, that it shall become, even through the Spirit, the means of holiness.

But Dr. Tyler has furnished us with a farther argument on this point. He admits that regeneration (conversion) is "the *first* moral act of the new-born soul,"—that "it is an intelligent act, and consequently includes the perception of the intellect, as well as the act of the will or heart,"—that "there can be no volition without motive,"—"no act of choice without some object perceived by the mind." Now we ask when the sinner *first* chooses God as his portion, whether his perception of the divine character is not some thought *voluntarily* bestowed on that object? We ask again, what this intelligent act is, if not a *voluntary* act, in which the mind considers and estimates the excellence or worth of some object as compared with other objects? We ask especially what a motive is, (which is thus pronounced necessary to volition,) if it does not involve the mind's estimate or view of the object *as desirable*—as the greatest good? And now, as Dr. Tyler says these acts of intellect are necessary to "the first moral act of the new-born soul, we ask, *how they come to exist?* Has their occurrence, to use his language, in reference to the same preliminary acts as described by us, "no cause; is it an accident which may or may not happen, and which nevertheless *must* happen in regard to every one of the human race, before he can be regenerated?" p. 16.

On this point Dr. Tyler will see, that he has the same questions to answer which he has urged upon us. Let him say then, whence comes this act of the intellect, which is indispensable to "the *first* moral act, of the new-born soul." He will not say that it is uncaused or accidental. It is an intelligent act—a perception of the object *as desirable*. It must therefore be voluntary, and arise from the impulse of some motive or desire of the mind. What is that motive? Not holy, nor sinful; for this would imply moral action, *before* "the first moral act of the new-born soul." Is there

“no motive at all,” to this *voluntary* perception of an object? “There can be no volition without a motive.” How then can Dr. Tyler, on his own principles, escape the conclusion which he condemns in us, that the soul in regeneration (conversion) perceives, estimates, or *uses* divine truth, under the impulse of an original principle of its being, which is neither good nor evil, and which is necessary to the existence of moral agency—viz. a simple desire of happiness?

“There are means of regeneration,” says Dr. Tyler; and he admits these means to be divine truth. p. 41. We ask then, *ought* sinners—are they under any moral obligation, so to use this truth, as to become holy by it, as the means of holiness? But they cannot do so according to Dr. Tyler’s statement of the doctrine of total depravity: it is physically impossible. They cannot do it either “with right motives, or wrong motives, or no motive at all.” Can the sinner then be bound to do that which is physically impossible? This Dr. Tyler denies. How then can he maintain that sinners are bound to make any use of the truths of the gospel, “without first denying the entire depravity of the unrenewed heart, and thus striking at the foundation of the doctrines of grace?” If Dr. Tyler replies, that what he intends, is simply that sinners, never *do in fact* use these means of holiness, be it so. But how has he undertaken to *prove* this fact, in his triplet as quoted above? Plainly by showing it to be physically impossible that they ever should use these means. The doctrine of total depravity as maintained by Dr. Tyler, involves this impossibility. The alternative then remains to him as a preacher of the gospel. He must either proclaim that sinners are under a physical inability so to use the truths of God as to become holy, and must of course, release them from all obligation to do it, and justify their neglect and contempt of the heavenly message; or he must on his principles, “deny the entire depravity of the unrenewed heart, and thus strike at the foundation of the doctrines of grace.”

Dr. Tyler says, “the sinner is *able* to do his duty.” p. 25. Now if Dr. Tyler will tell us *how* the sinner is able to do his duty, when as he maintains, he cannot do it from right motives, or wrong motives, or no motive at all, he will see the fallacy of his own reasoning. He will see that after all his admissions of the doctrine of the *natural ability* of sinners, his own reasoning proceeds on the assumption of a natural inability; and that what he calls a *moral* inability, is nothing diverse from a natural inability. For what is a natural *inability*, if that is not, which involves three actually existing physical impossibilities? And what kind of depravity is that, which is created by such an inability as Dr. Tyler has described? Is this the true doctrine of man’s total depravity, as revealed in the scriptures?

We only add on this part of the subject, that Dr. Tyler proves his own doctrine to be incorrect. He unites with us in saying that to suppose it *necessary* for sinners to use the means of regeneration, i. e. the truth, with sinful motives, involves the necessity of "doing evil that good may come." And yet, though he explodes the orthodox doctrine of using the means of regeneration, it will follow from his principles, that sinners must use the truth from selfish motives. For he says again and again, that all the acts of the sinner prior to the love of God are dictated by selfishness. Speaking of the sinner's own happiness prior to a change of heart, he says, "This *fills his eye* and engrosses *all his thoughts* and all his purposes. To this he is supremely devoted. Consequently he is supremely selfish." What language could more strongly affirm that every thought and every purpose of the sinner before a change of heart, is selfish and of course sinful? But, says Dr. Tyler, "motives presented to the mind are *necessary* to the exercise of holy affections"—"there can be no volition *without* motive." He even says, that "the first moral act of the new-born soul—is an *intelligent act*, and consequently *includes* the perception of the intellect, as well as the act of the will or heart." p. 13. He goes farther still, and speaks of the preference of the glory of God, as *consequent* on its appearing to the individual as the greater good. p. 59. If these things are so, then it is undeniable that this perception, or intelligent act which is *necessary* to the first moral act of the new-born soul, is selfish and sinful; in other words, that sinful acts on the part of the sinner are necessary to the change in regeneration, and not only so, but are *included* in it; and, sinful as they are, constitute a part, even an essential part, of "the complex act." How far is this from making sinful acts necessary to holiness, and of course the means of regeneration?

We would not intimate that Dr. Tyler actually embraces the conclusions to which his argument inevitably leads. We have dwelt upon them merely for the sake of showing, that there must be somewhere a fallacy in his reasoning. That fallacy arises, we apprehend, from his principles of moral agency. He denies not only the fact, but the *possibility* of man's ever acting under the impulse of a simple desire of happiness. For he maintains, that every motive must be either selfish or holy—either right or wrong. If this be true, it is intuitively certain that no moral being can ever *begin* to act at all, or can ever produce a radical change in his own character. Whence, for example, arose the *first* moral act of Adam? By what impulse was he prompted to his *first* exercise of love to God? Not by a holy motive or intention, for this supposes holiness *before* moral action. As it was impossible for him to act from "no motive at all," it is intuitively certain, on Dr. Tyler's principles, that no such thing as moral action could ever *begin* to exist in man.

But supposing moral action to have commenced; how on Dr. Tyler's principles was it possible for Adam *radically* to change his character, and to choose an object which God had interdicted? Not from a sinful motive, for this supposes sin, *before* the *first* sin. Not from "no motive at all." On Dr. Tyler's principles, then, it was impossible, in the nature of things, for Adam to fall. And yet he did fall; and the scriptures show us that the motive, in this case, was a simple impulse of his nature, which was neither good nor evil—that he became sinful by *choosing* to gratify that impulse in defiance of God's commands. Now we agree with Dr. Tyler that when the moral character is once *formed*, either on the side of sin or holiness; then all acts which take their rise from the predominant principle of the soul, are either morally right or wrong, according to the principle from which they spring. And we think that Dr. Tyler, on more reflection, will agree with us, that the impulse or motive which leads to the *commencement*, or to a *radical* change, of moral action, cannot, in the nature of the case, be of a moral character. It must be some simple desire implanted in our being, which makes the object chosen, appear desirable or good. Now we stated that in the *radical* change of giving the heart to God, this desire is the love of happiness—that up to the identical moment when the sinner submits to God, the mind had always been governed by selfishness; and that of course the only real using of the truth as a means of the change in question, was at the moment of that change. Such a use of truth, Dr. Tyler is himself compelled to admit, as we shall see hereafter. And this, as we expressly stated, is all that we meant by a using of the means in question.

II. Dr. Tyler next offers "a few remarks for the purpose of correcting some errors in regard to the meaning and application of terms." p. 10.

1. "Regeneration," he says, "denotes the act of God, and not the act of man; and to call the act of man regeneration, is a misapplication of terms." pp. 11, 12. We employed the word regeneration, in accordance with Dr. Spring's use of the term, in the essay on which our remarks were founded, to denote "a moral *change* in man, produced by the Holy Spirit." Chr. Spect. for 1829, p. 19. That this is a common use of the term, appears from Dr. Hopkins himself, who attempted to introduce the distinction on which Dr. Tyler so much insists. "Regeneration and conversion are often used only as two words meaning the *same* thing; and it is certain that all that can properly be understood by them, is that *change* and renovation, which is expressed in scripture by being born again." Syst. Vol. I. p. 530. Accordingly, his distinction which confines the term regeneration to "the act of God" has been adopted by very few writers. Dr. Dwight says,

of regeneration, "this *change* of heart is the commencement of holiness." Dr. Griffin says, "regeneration is nothing more nor less than the commencement of holiness in the soul." Dr. Doddridge and Dr. Witherspoon in their treatises on regeneration, uniformly describe it as "a change of heart" produced by the Holy Spirit. Similar examples might be adduced to any extent from Dr. Smalley, Dr. Strong, and a multitude of others. Indeed, we do not believe that any author can be found who uniformly restricts the application of this term to "the act of God." When God is spoken of as the "author of regeneration," for example, who ever meant to lay down the bald proposition, that God is the author of his own "acts?"

But says Dr. Tyler, "who would feel authorized to say, that the sinner regenerates himself?" We think, no one; and the reason is, not that the word is used to denote exclusively the act of God, but to denote a change in man under this peculiar relation, that it is "produced by the Holy Spirit." The question is not whether the word *includes* the act of God, but whether it *excludes* the act of man. Let any one ask himself, whether the phrase *God regenerates a sinner*, or the *sinner is regenerated by the Spirit*, does not assert the fact of a *change* in the sinner, as well as the fact of divine agency in its production. But says Dr. Tyler, "this use is not warranted by the scriptures;" and he cites some passages to prove it. Respecting the first of these passages, "*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*,"—even Dr. Hopkins says, (and this shows that his definition was, in his own view, entirely arbitrary,) that "here in *regeneration*, he (St. James) includes the *effect* wrought, or conversion, and *does not mean only* the *act* by which the effect is produced."* Take any other of the texts cited by Dr. Tyler. "Who were born (begotten) of God." Does this describe the *act* of God, *exclusively*? Are men said to be begotten of God, and does the language express no change in them? But let Dr. Tyler decide the question. In a comment on John iii. 5, from his own pen, it is written, "Christ inculcated *simply* the necessity of a *change* of heart;" and in another instance, the text is said "to denote the purifying *effects* of the Holy Spirit." Nay, only a few sentences before his strong condemnation of our use of the term, Dr. Tyler himself describes regeneration in exactly the same manner. "The question is, whether sinners, properly speaking, ever use the means of *regeneration*; that is, whether any acts performed by the sinner antecedent to a *change of heart*, are means of effecting this change." p. 8.† Such is Dr. Tyler's own use of the word *regeneration*; and it shows how

* Syst. Vol. I. p. 537.

† Vid. also pp. 11, 41, 42, etc.

difficult it was to write five sentences, even to prove that regeneration denotes the act of God *exclusively*, without using it to *include* also, the *effect* of that act, viz. the *change* in man.

But what advantage to Dr. Tyler's view, is gained by confining the word regeneration *exclusively* to the act of God? He supposes it to "go far towards deciding the question, whether sinners, properly speaking, ever use the means of regeneration." He says, "if the view which has now been taken, is correct, the question is reduced to this single point—whether there are *conditions* of regeneration, conditions with which unrenewed men may comply, and on compliance with which, we are warranted to assure them, God will renew their hearts." p. 12. Here Dr. Tyler is misled, by overlooking the obvious distinction between using *means*, and complying with a *condition*. Food is indispensable as a means to the continuance of human life; but who ever thought of considering the use of it, on the part of men, as a condition, "on compliance with which, we are warranted to assure them that God will" prolong their lives? Take the term regeneration then, in Dr. Tyler's import, to denote "the renewing act of God;" and is the question "reduced to this single point, whether there are *conditions* of regeneration?" No. There may be acts requisite on the part of the sinner, without which, renewing grace will never be exerted; and yet that grace may not be *pledged* to accompany those acts in any instance. It was thus we stated the case in our concluding number. We there dwelt at length on that most alarming fact to impenitent sinners, that the intervention of the Holy Spirit is in no instance pledged to any act of theirs—that there is at best only a bare "peradventure" that "God will give them repentance." Nor is this inconsistent with saying that sinners have something to do *in order* to be saved.

2. Dr. Tyler proceeds to point out a second error in our "use and application of terms." "I am not satisfied," he says, "that there is ground for the distinction which he (the reviewer) makes between the popular and theological use of the term regeneration." p. 13. Our distinction was founded on the *complex* nature of the moral act of loving God; and is briefly this: The word regeneration, in its more popular and *comprehensive* sense, includes the preliminary mental acts of the perception and comparison of the objects of affection, together with the final act of the will or heart: In its *restricted* sense, a frequent *theological* import, it denotes the act of the *will* or the *heart*, *merely*.

This distinction does not "satisfy" Dr. Tyler. Why then did he not show that it is unauthorized, and groundless? Why, instead of telling us, that he is "not satisfied with it," and that he is far from believing that regeneration was ever used as it is by the reviewer, "unless it be by those who deny the total depravity of the

heart," did not Dr. Tyler meet our arguments on this point, as these are founded on the usage of terms, the only criterion in such a case? But Dr. Tyler has stated one objection to this distinction.

Every voluntary act necessarily implies intelligence. There can be no volition without motive; no act of choice without some object perceived by the mind; and to talk of volitions abstracted from intelligence, is as irrational, as it would be to talk of volitions in stones or in trees. There appears therefore to be no ground for the distinction made by the reviewer, between the popular and theological import of the term regeneration. p. 13.

Dr. Tyler here admits, in the fullest manner, the *comprehensive* import of the term in question. He also states expressly elsewhere, that "love to God, repentance, etc., are *complex* acts of the mind." p. 13. Our error, therefore, if there is one, must lie in supposing that theologians have ever considered them as *simple* acts—have ever restricted the term regeneration to a change in the *will* or *affections*, as distinguished from the attendant acts of the *intellect*. Now Dr. Griffin, in the very passage quoted by Dr. Tyler, says, "holiness is a *simple* principle first introduced in regeneration." Lect. p. 126. Dr. Strong says of regeneration, "the heart, or the *will* and *affections*, are the seat of this change." Serm. vol. I. p. 167. Love and hatred he makes simple acts of the will. "*Choosing* a truth or object is *loving* it, *rejecting* is *hating* it." vol. I. p. 103. Dr. Hopkins says, "It must also be observed and kept in mind, that sin, as does holiness, consists in the *motions* or *exercises* of the heart or *will*, and in *NOTHING* else." Syst. vol. I. p. 344. Dr. Tyler himself says, "If the sinner is able to do his duty, he is able immediately to love God. But it is said, *the act* of giving the heart to God, is an intelligent act. Granted. So is every voluntary act. And has not the sinner sufficient *knowledge* to render him capable of loving God?" p. 26. Here it is obvious Dr. Tyler distinguishes "the *act* of giving the heart to God, or 'loving God,' from the *knowledge* which "renders him capable of loving God." Does the phrase "loving God," or "the act of giving the heart to God," denote in such a case, "a complex act;" or simply the act of the will or heart?

Dr. Tyler's own "Strictures," therefore, furnish us with an example of the distinction which he condemns. When he speaks of love, as a "complex act," he uses the term love in its *comprehensive* sense. When he distinguishes it from "knowledge," he uses the term in its *restricted*, theological sense, to denote a simple act of the *will* or *affections*. Let him apply this distinction to the commencement of holiness in the soul, and he will have our distinction between the comprehensive and restricted sense of regeneration.

If any farther justification of this distinction were necessary, we might again appeal to scriptural authority. We will only refer to a passage already cited. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet to thy testimonies." We ask if the act or acts of *thought*, are not here distinguished from the act of *turning* to the divine testimonies? But says Dr. Tyler, a sinner "may think on his ways with self-loathing and godly sorrow." Be it so. But can the sinner feel godly sorrow, without first, in the order of nature, thinking on his ways? and is this *thinking*, the same thing with the *feeling*, which follows it? or are the two acts *distinguished*, in *this* language of the Psalmist? But "this thoughtfulness," says Dr. Tyler, "denotes a right or wrong state of the heart." Of course the sinner, in his first act of turning from his wicked ways, does it by thinking on them either with a *right* state of heart, which Dr. Tyler denies; or by thinking on them with a *wrong* state of heart, which he also denies; or by not thinking on them at all, which he also denies; or by thinking on them, as we affirm he does, under the simple impulse of a desire of happiness. Dr. Tyler can now tell us in which way this is done. At all events, we are fully justified, not only by the usage of Dr. Tyler himself, but by that of Dr. Hopkins, Dr. Strong, Dr. Griffin, and we might add Dr. Dwight, and many others, in attaching a *restricted* sense to such terms as love, faith, repentance, regeneration, etc., in addition to the *comprehensive* one as given by Dr. Tyler.

3. We now pass to consider a third charge of erroneous phraseology, viz. with respect to the term *selfishness*. "According to him," (the reviewer,) says Dr. Tyler, "selfishness consists in the active love of the world, or in preferring the world to God, as our portion or chief good. This is the sense in which he invariably uses the term, throughout the discussion." "But," he adds, "cannot selfishness look beyond this world? May not a person desire exemption from future evil and the possession of future good, from selfish motives?" p. 14. This statement respecting our use of the word in question, we are compelled to say, *is not correct*. In opening the discussion, we made a distinction between self-love and selfishness; and with the formality of *definition*, described the latter in the broadest terms, as being "the preference of *some other* object, to the *general* good." p. 20. In this sense, therefore, we had a right to expect our readers to understand that term, "throughout the discussion." Having occasion to employ some single word to describe all the objects of selfish desire, we made use of the term "world," as the most general and appropriate. But, in doing this, we were careful to show that we used the term in its broadest sense, to describe every object, which could come into competition with God. In a second description of selfishness,

we therefore said, "the object of this principle or purpose is complex, comprizing *all* that we include under the term world; *ALL* that from which man is capable of deriving happiness, and which *can* come into competition, as an object of affection, with his Maker." p. 23. Certainly we had a right to expect our use of the term "world," to be understood according to this our express definition. It has the sanction of scriptural authority. "To keep himself unspotted from the *world*," is an apostle's description of moral purity; and Dr. Tyler himself tells us, that it is not "*this* world" alone, which may furnish an occasion of sin.* Our Savior likewise, in describing the two great objects of supreme affection among men—the "two masters" which divide the hearts of our whole race—represents them to be "God and *Mammon*;" and who will charge him with an error in the use of terms, in thus extending the word *riches* to embrace all the objects of selfish desire? So far were we, indeed, from maintaining, as Dr. Tyler represents us, that the sinner cannot desire exemption from future evil and the possession of future good, from selfish motives, that we expressly declared this to be a frequent fact. Speaking of men in certain circumstances, we said, "With what fervor of supplication can the sinner now seek deliverance from the wrath to come! We have no doubt that such views and such desires have prompted many a sinner, even with cries and tears, to adopt what he regards as the necessary means of averting a doom, so dreadful as that which awaits him." p. 29. Of these desires we added, "they are as *selfish* as any the human heart can harbor." And yet Dr. Tyler represents us as "*invariably*" giving to the term selfishness a *restricted* signification; when in fact it appears from our repeated definitions, and express assertions, that we never used it in that sense at all. It would be mere affectation for us to say, that we do not suspect Dr. Tyler of designing to misstate our language. But such an error, under such circumstances, may serve perhaps to show, that, if he misconceives and misrepresents our reasoning, on subjects of far greater moment, the fault does not lie wholly on our side.

III. We come now to the turning point of the whole discussion; we mean *the distinction between self-love and selfishness*. On the authority of Dugald Stewart, we used the term self-love, to denote the simple desire of happiness. In this sense it is employed by Dr. Griffin, and many other divines. "Mere self-love is only the love of happiness, and aversion to misery; and so far from being sinful, is an essential attribute of a rational and even a sensitive nature."† This feeling we represented as lying at the foundation of

* Other instances may be found, in James iv. 4. 1 John xi. 15—17.

† Park-street Lecture, 3d ed. p. 74.

every motive ; as “the primary cause or reason of all acts of preference or choice, which fix supremely on any object.” On the ground of this statement, Dr. Tyler represents us as maintaining, that “self-love, or the desire of one’s happiness, is the *controlling principle*, by which every moral being is influenced.” p. 19. Now we expressly guarded against any such construction of our language. We went on to say, that “whenever we fix on the object self-love primarily *prompts* to the choice, NOT *determines* it.” p. 22. Could any language more strongly affirm, that it is not a controlling principle? Dr. Tyler represents us as teaching that self-love is a *moral affection*. Now we explicitly declared, that every thing of a moral nature lies in the *will*; and that self-love “exists *prior* to the act of the will, *by* which (act) we fix our *affections* on any object as our chief good.” p. 22. How then has Dr. Tyler been led into so absolute a misstatement of our doctrine, on this important point? Obviously by confounding “the *primary cause or reason*” of a thing, with a *controlling or governing* moral principle. The governing principle of Adam before the fall, was holy. What then, we ask, was the “*primary cause or reason*” of his *first* act of sin? Not his governing principle, surely; for this could prompt him only to holiness. The two things are therefore totally distinct. By confounding them, Dr. Tyler was led to deny, that any act could be performed except from a holy or a sinful motive; and thus to exclude sinners from all using of the means of grace, and to shut them up within a triplet of physical impossibilities, as to ever doing their duty. If Dr. Tyler thus confounds things which are totally diverse in their nature, he, at least, ought not to represent *us* as doing so; when we had expressly said of this “*primary cause or reason*,” it simply “*prompts* to choice, NOT *determines* it.”

Dr. Tyler also represents us as maintaining that “self-love is a *supreme affection*.” p. 20. The word “supreme” is a term of comparison, and presupposes a *competition* between two or more objects. But what competition can exist between the desire of happiness, and any other affection of the human heart? Does love to God and the general good, require any sacrifice of man’s real happiness? It is not the highest enjoyment of the renewed soul; and does not every sacrifice for their sake, bring with it an ample recompense, even in this life, and “in the world to come, life everlasting?” It was impossible for us, then, on the principles which we laid down, to consider the mere desire of happiness, as a *supreme affection*. It would be making it come into competition with itself, in the very exercise of affections to which it prompts. We stated it to be an essential attribute of our being; which like animal life, pervades every thing, and comes into competition with nothing. As well might Dr. Tyler now say, that we represent human life to be *supreme action*, as the desire of happiness to be “a *supreme affection*.”

It is not then, merely as a being who desires happiness, that man is either sinful or holy: It is when different objects, which may minister to this desire, are brought into *competition* with each other, and when he is called upon to *choose*, and when he does choose, between them. When God and the general good on the one hand, and some inferior opposing object on the other, are thus presented to our choice, the *preference*, or love of the former, is holiness; of the latter, is selfishness or sin. Selfishness therefore differs from self-love, not in degree merely, but in kind. The latter we described, as an original impulse of our nature, which fixes on *no* definite external object; the former as an act of the *will*—a selection and preference of some object, to the exclusion of all that can stand in competition with it.

Why then is the term *selfishness* applied rather to the choice of a limited, than of a general good, if both may minister to self-love, or a desire of happiness? Because he who loves supremely an inferior or limited object, does it to the *exclusion* of a greater good. He arrays his happiness, as found in that limited object, against the happiness of the universe. He magnifies *self*, at the expense of every other interest. We therefore call him *selfish*. He does it without the least necessity; and even sacrifices, in doing it, a much higher happiness, which he might have found in coincidence with that of others. From the very constitution of his nature, the perfection of man in character, as well as happiness, will forever lie in promoting the happiness of others.

These observations show us, why the expressions, “a desire of one’s *own* happiness,” “his *own* private interest,” “his *own* individual gratification,” etc., are so generally used to denote a *selfish* state of mind. The terms “*own*,” “*private*,” “*individual*,” etc., in such cases, are contrasted with “*other*,” “*general*,” “*public*,” and show that the happiness in question, is sought in opposition to the happiness of other beings. But Dr. Tyler perpetually confounds these expressions, and makes them synonymous with the phrase “a desire of happiness.” He even reasons from our statements, as though we also had confounded them; and thus throws a cloud over the distinction, which we had clearly traced between self-love and selfishness. As a single instance, we may take the following. “Now if a person’s *own* happiness is the ultimate end of pursuit—he is influenced by the selfish principle; and if *this* is the ultimate end of all moral beings, as the reviewer contends, I see not but every moral being in the universe is supremely selfish.” p. 21. “As the *reviewer* contends?” No. As Dr. Tyler alters our statement, by inserting a word which arrays “the *happiness* of the agent” (the reviewer’s expression) in opposition to the happiness of

others, and thus *changes* self-love into selfishness.* When we said that happiness is the ultimate end of the agent, in all specific voluntary actions, we stated only what Dr. Dwight has laid down with much greater force: "When virtue itself is desired, it is desired only for the *enjoyment* which it furnishes."† The term "ultimate end," we know, has been often employed to express the *object*, as wealth, power, the glory of God, etc., in which happiness is found. But it is obvious from the whole tenor of our remarks, in the passages referred to by Dr. Tyler, (pp. 19—22,) that we were not speaking of any object *external* to the mind. It was a "*desire*" of the soul, we were considering. We said it was the master spring of human action—that its object was happiness—that this happiness, (a *feeling* of the soul, not an *external* object,) was "the ultimate end," which man seeks in every thing—in wealth, power, or "virtue." And we only ask, how desire could exist,—how any external object could become a motive—how man would differ from the clod beneath his feet, if it were not for the desire and hope of happiness, prompting him to acts of the will? "If this be so," says Dr. Tyler, "I see not that there is any *radical* distinction between holiness and sin. The highest seraph and the arch-apostate have both the same ultimate end in view." p. 20. No. In Dr. Tyler's sense of the term,—as denoting that object (external to the mind) in which happiness is sought—their ultimate ends are as far asunder, as heaven and hell. But, as we have just proved, our whole context shows, that we used the term "ultimate end" in another sense. We were not speaking of *external* objects of pursuit. We were speaking of happiness, a feeling of the soul, "our being's *end* and aim." Is there "no radical distinction," then, between the seraph who *chooses* the service of God, and the apostate who *chooses* to rebel against him, because they both *aim* at happiness, in the choice they make? In that CHOICE of different objects, lies "the radical distinction." Both the nature of the objects and the kind of happiness are diverse. Dr. Tyler says we make them differ only in their "judgment," as to the means of securing happiness. Far from it: we make them differ in their *decision* on that subject. With a full knowledge of duty, with the same properties as moral agents, the one chose, and continues to choose the service of his Maker; the other chose, and continues to choose, the path of rebellion. The one chooses the Creator, the other, the

* When the context plainly decides the meaning to be otherwise, the term "own" may sometimes be found in connection with the word happiness, without denoting a selfish affection. But the present case is very different. The term "own" is either a mere expletive, or it restricts the meaning to a selfish desire. But it is not an expletive. Take it away, and Dr. Tyler's inference falls to the ground.

† Theol. 1st ed. Vol. III. p. 166.

creature. The one resorts to "living fountains," the other to "broken cisterns." The one now acts from a principle that would bless the universe, the other from a principle that would sacrifice it for an inferior object.

But Dr. Tyler carries moral distinctions back of choice, into the "essential attributes," the constitutional propensities of our being. He maintains that, previous to regeneration, self-love and selfishness are identically the *same*, as motives to action. On what other principle could he affirm that "right motives, wrong motives, or no motive at all," exhaust all the sources or springs of human conduct? If the desire of happiness can, *in the nature of things*, exist, before regeneration, as distinct from selfishness, there may be a fourth supposition in the case—the very supposition which he was combatting. But to place the matter beyond all doubt, Dr. Tyler says, "Every moral being, destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, is *necessarily* a selfish being." p. 22. And again, "To suppose, therefore, selfishness to be suspended in the natural heart, and self-love to exist and operate, is to suppose an *absolute impossibility*." The necessity—the impossibility here described, lies in the *nature of things*. It is simply the impossibility, that two objects which are the same, should still be different. Self-love and selfishness cannot be separated, even in idea. "To *suppose*" the one without the other, is "to suppose an absolute impossibility."

What then is man, on the principle here laid down by Dr. Tyler? He comes from the hand of his Maker with a desire of happiness, as "an essential attribute" of his being. He can no more cease to feel it, than he can cease to be. Every such feeling is "necessarily" selfish and sinful. And he must lie down forever under the wrath of God, for having been that, which his Creator made him. If this is not PHYSICAL DEPRAVITY, we know not the meaning of the term. It is because we will not thus confound self-love with selfishness, that Dr. Tyler represents us, as having "fallen into a grand mistake, as to the radical distinction between holiness and sin."

In stating these consequences thus strongly, we utterly disclaim the thought of imputing them to Dr. Tyler, as forming any part of his actual belief. But we say, he must fairly meet them, or he must renounce his fundamental principle, that "*every moral being, destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, is NECESSARILY a selfish being.*"

Let us now consider the principle of our review, which Dr. Tyler condemns so strongly. We maintained that man, as a moral agent, who is addressed by motives to holiness, *has a constitutional susceptibility to the good which those motives offer.* p. 22. Not that this susceptibility, even in its highest excitement, partakes at

all of the nature of holiness. On the contrary, the sinner may have a deep conviction of the excellence of the good which is offered him in God, and a goading sense of his obligation to embrace it, and yet may actually *choose* the unsatisfying objects of the world. Such is often the case with men under the reproaches of conscience, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit; and it always enhances their guilt.

This susceptibility may be contemplated in another point of light; viz. as a *capacity of receiving happiness from the happiness of others*. This, in fact, is its most elementary form. And when, from a regard to the happiness to be found in seeing others happy, we love their happiness *supremely*, i. e. prefer or choose its existence in the highest degree, this preference is TRUE BENEVOLENCE. Such, primarily, is love to God. His perfect blessedness—comprising, as he does within himself, the greatest portion of being, and capacity of happiness—deserves the supreme love of all moral agents. On this love of benevolence, is founded the love of complacency. If we love the happiness of others, we shall love those who delight in promoting it. Above all, we shall love God, whose benevolence is infinite.

Thus, then, is man, as a moral agent, *capacitated* to love God supremely, from a regard to *happiness*, as distinct from any selfish feeling. Now if Dr. Tyler denies this—if he maintains, that “every moral being, destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, is *necessarily* a selfish being”—it becomes him to declare, that *there is nothing in the nature of a motive to sinners, in all the offers of the gospel*. The promises of divine mercy, the compassion of a crucified Redeemer, the proffers of life eternal in the heavens, may, as inducements to right action, be as well addressed to a corpse, as to that living spirit in man, which is formed in the image of his Maker, and is fitted to be like Him in character and blessedness.

What, we ask, is a motive? Can the happiness which God proffers to sinful men, become a motive to an animal or a clod? Would it be such to man, if man were constitutionally incapacitated for enjoying it, and of course incapacitated for regarding it as a good to him? If so, let Dr. Tyler say it, and meet the consequence, that man is no more *capable* of choosing this kind of good, than an animal or a clod. But perhaps he will reply, man must *first* love, i. e. choose this good, before he can be *capable* of enjoying it. If by this he means, that man must choose this good, before he can *actually* enjoy it, or come into its possession, this is true. But then, *actual* enjoyment is one thing, and the constitutional *capacity* of the mind to enjoy, is quite another. We are capacitated to enjoy many things, which, nevertheless, we do not choose, as the portion of our souls. Perhaps Dr. Tyler may say, with Ed-

wards and some others, that the will, considered as a constitutional property of the mind, *involves* this capacity of happiness, as well as includes the power of choice. But this mode of *classifying* the mental properties, changes not the properties themselves. The *capacity* to enjoy the object of choice is still admitted, as indispensable to choice itself. Whether identified with the *faculty* of will or not, it is still regarded as a mental *property*, in distinction from the mental act of preference or choice. Should Dr. Tyler say, that we choose the object, in order that we may enjoy the happiness which it can afford us; be it so. Then, after all, we choose it from a regard to happiness, and if this be a *selfish* choice, then is love to God, selfishness.

Again; Dr. Tyler says, "there can be no volition without a motive." But can there be a motive, without some *good*—either enjoyment or exemption from suffering—expected and sought by the agent who wills or chooses? Can there be volition, without some *regard* to that motive, which is necessary to volition? Let it be shown, then, how "there can be *no* volition without a motive," and yet how there *can* be a volition, without any regard to the good or happiness, which the motive involves.

Again; if man cannot choose right, from a regard to happiness, he cannot choose right at all. For an unregenerate man to choose from a regard to his happiness, is, according to Dr. Tyler, to be selfish and sinful. To choose *right*, from a regard to his happiness, is therefore impossible; and since "every moral act is a voluntary act," and "there can be no voluntary act without a motive," and no motive where there is no good or happiness which the agent is *capacitated* to enjoy, it follows, that in respect to right moral action, unregenerate man "is a block."

But perhaps it will be said, that *the happiness of others* is the motive, in all benevolent or right action. The word motive, when thus used, denotes some *object* external to the mind. It must not be confounded, therefore, with the *internal* principle or feeling, which prompts us to seek these objects, and which makes them motives to us. Thus we say wealth is the motive of one, honor of another, etc. But do we mean by this, that he who chooses wealth, or honor, proposes no happiness to himself? Is it not true, that the *enjoyment* connected with wealth or honor, is the real "ultimate end" which is regarded in the choice? If not, why choose wealth or honor at all? So, the happiness of others is the *objective* motive to a benevolent choice. But who can doubt, that he who chooses the happiness of others, does so, for the happiness he expects in seeing others happy? Must a being, to be truly benevolent in his choice, neither propose to find, nor actually find, any pleasure in producing or witnessing the happiness of others? Is he *selfish*, just in proportion as he proposes and finds happiness, in

making others happy? Far different has been our understanding of the term selfishness. Who, in reading that ascription "to Him that sitteth on the throne," "for thy *pleasure* they are and were created," has ever doubted, on that account, whether God in the work of creation, was perfectly benevolent? When we read, "it is *more blessed* (more *happy*) to *give* than to receive," who ever suspected, that to propose and enjoy this blessedness, could result only from the selfish principle? Who will question, that the perfection and glory of the law of God, consists in this; that obedience to it constitutes the perfection of man, in character and in blessedness?

We readily admit, indeed, that he who seeks his own happiness, *in any other way* than that of pleasing God, and making others happy, is selfish and sinful. But who is the good man, if *he* is not, who proposes and finds his highest happiness in pleasing God, and in promoting the greatest sum of happiness? If the sinner then becomes a good man, by fixing his heart, through grace, on this object, and with this motive, is he not regenerated, converted, or made holy?

If to act from a regard to happiness, is selfish and sinful, what shall we say of the principle laid down by the Savior, that where a man's *treasure* is, there will his *heart* be also? What shall we say of that law, which requires man to "love his neighbor as himself," if he is not to love himself at all? What shall we say of the Savior himself, even in his great work of benevolence; "who for the *joy* that was set before him, endured the cross?" What shall we say, of all the servants of the Most High, who, like Moses, have "had respect unto the *recompense* of reward;" if man, as a "MORAL AGENT," cannot desire happiness without being selfish and sinful? For this is the true question. Dr. Tyler, we know, has *applied* his principle, only to "unrenewed men." But, if true at all, its application does not stop there. Man, *as* man, on Dr. Tyler's principle, is necessarily selfish in desiring happiness. For, take him distinct from his first moral act,—in his character of a *mere* moral agent,—and of course "destitute of benevolence." He begins to act: his first desire is happiness. "Every moral agent, destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, is necessarily selfish." Man, therefore, *as* man, is necessarily selfish and sinful, in desiring happiness. And yet Moses "had respect to the recompense of reward." Was he sinful in doing so? Or had he received new powers of moral agency: had he ceased to be a man, and risen to the level of some higher order of beings?

But let us turn to the motives urged on "unrenewed men." What shall we say of all the persuasives, which God uses to induce the impenitent to love and serve him? Is there nothing of the nature of good or happiness to sinners, comprised in these motives

—no good proffered—none in God, who offers himself to us as our God—none in eternal life—in glory, honor, and immortality—none in the rivers of pleasure, and fulness of joy at God's right hand—none in deliverance from everlasting fire—none in salvation with everlasting glory ;—is there no good in all this, in view of which man, as a moral being, is *capacitated* to choose God, without being selfish in his choice? Do these objects, as objects of regard, *necessarily* come into competition with God, as an object of supreme affection? Is not the sinner *bound* to yield to these motives, by actually choosing God as his portion, in view of them? Is it then impossible, in the nature of things, that he should do this? Is it impossible by three physical impossibilities, that he should even think of these objects, in order to choose them, without being actuated by the selfish principle?

We ask still farther on this point, can the acts of the mind, which we have described as using the means of regeneration, be selfish at all? What selfish purpose can the sinner propose to accomplish, by thinking of God, for the *sake* of determining whether he will not choose God, as his chief good? But, says Dr. Tyler, "Might it not as well be asked, what selfish purpose can any one propose to accomplish, by attempting to pray, to read the scriptures, or visit the sanctuary?" We answer, no,—and for this decisive reason; the latter acts *may be* dictated by the selfish principle, or done for a selfish purpose; the former, if actually performed, cannot take place until the control of the selfish principle is suspended in the soul. A sinner with "sufficient knowledge," think of choosing God, to subserve the purposes of selfishness! think of actually fixing his heart on God in holy affection, to promote sinful ends! think of becoming truly *benevolent*, for *selfish* purposes; and this with "sufficient knowledge" of the difference between selfishness and benevolence! There is no greater absurdity. Dr. Tyler's mistake arises from imagining, that the acts which we described as "a using of the means of regeneration," can, in the nature of things, be dictated by selfish feelings. Dr. Tyler proceeds thus:

If this theory be correct, I would seriously inquire, whether all which is necessary to insure the regeneration of a sinner, is not a conviction of the understanding that he has mistaken the true way of securing his highest happiness? So soon as he shall be convinced that a greater degree of happiness is to be derived from God, than from the world, will not self-love immediately prompt him to change the object of his preference? Does not his depravity consist entirely in ignorance—in a mistake of judgment? And will not light infallibly correct this mistake, and insure his conversion to God? I propose these questions for the solemn consideration of the reviewer. p. 20.

We answer in the negative; and we add, that these questions would not have been put, if Dr. Tyler had entered more fully in-

to Edwards' views of moral agency. By "a conviction of the understanding," is here meant the dictate of reason, or sound "judgment;" and Dr. Tyler infers that if happiness is "the ultimate end" at which the sinner aims, his reason or judgment needs only to receive "light," to "insure his conversion to God." But Edwards says, in his treatise on the Will, "If by the dictate of the understanding is meant, what *reason* declares to be best or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is *not true* that the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of *reason* is quite a different matter from things appearing now most *agreeable*." part 1. § 2. We dwelt on this state of the soul—this "mind's view," as Edwards calls it, or appearing "*agreeable* to the mind," which determines the will in *opposition* to one's better judgment or enlightened reason. We showed that it constitutes a grand and fatal obstacle to the sinner's conversion, while the selfish principle predominates in the soul. Having thus shown in form that *more* is "necessary to insure the regeneration of the sinner," than "a conviction of the understanding that he has mistaken the true way of securing happiness"—having shown that man's "depravity" consists *not* "in ignorance or a mistake of judgment," but in the "*selfish principle*," which leads him to act in opposition to his known duty and interest, we did not expect to be charged, in a tone of such imposing solemnity, with maintaining principles diametrically contrary to the whole tenor of our reasoning.

But on the main question, whether there is no distinction between self-love and selfishness, in "the unrenewed heart," we may appeal to Dr. Tyler's own decision. Speaking of self-love as the controlling principle of action, he says, "It is this *inordinate* self-love, operating as a governing principle of the mind, and controlling all its moral acts, which we denominate selfishness." p. 21. What then is self-love which is *not* inordinate? Is it a real property or state of the mind, or is it nothing? Dr. Tyler speaks too of self-love as "a *subordinate*" principle in holy beings. How then, we ask, came this "self-love" thus distinguished from "selfishness," in the breasts of the unrenewed? Was it implanted there for the first time, in regeneration? Or was it an original and "essential attribute" of their souls as moral beings? Dr. Tyler will not, we presume, assert the former. Self-love therefore as distinguished from selfishness, is an original principle of our nature. And now will Dr. Tyler maintain, that "to *suppose*" an original principle of our nature to be what it *is*, and not something *else*, "is an absolute impossibility?" Other instances of the same ample concession of the point before us, might be adduced, from Dr. Tyler's Strictures. These, however, are sufficient to show, that the principle of our review is so evident to every mind—so much of the nature of an

axiom or first principle, "that it will out," in spite of express denials of it, and formal arguments to support such denials. And yet, on this principle, almost every part of Dr. Tyler's reasoning against the conclusions of our review, depends. His ample concession of this main principle will not be forgotten.

If authorities were wanting on the main subject in debate, we might again appeal to Edwards, who every where maintains, that a desire of happiness is essential to the existence of volition. "If nothing could be either pleasing or displeasing, agreeable or disagreeable to a man, then he could *incline* to nothing, and *will* nothing. But if he is *capable* of having inclination, will and choice, then what he inclines to and chooses, is *grateful* to him; whatever that be, whether it be his own private good, the good of his neighbors, or the glory of God. And so far as it is grateful or pleasing to him, so far it is a part of HIS *pleasure, good, or happiness.*"* Dr. Tyler seems to imagine, (p. 59,) that he sets aside such testimonies, by saying that, according to Edwards, an object sought as "good," may be "beautiful and pleasant, or deformed and irksome to the mind, viewing it *as it is in itself.*" But how does this alter the case? Is not the thing, when viewed "as it is in *itself,*" "grateful" to the mind, as a means or source of happiness? On what other ground, upon the principles of Edwards, could it be chosen? For "the will is as the greatest apparent *good.*" Is it then "an *absolute* impossibility," that man, as "a moral agent," should choose God for his portion, from a regard to the good or happiness which he expects in such a choice?

Dr. Tyler proceeds to say, "Edwards did not lay down the principle, that self-love is the primary cause of all moral action. If he had, instead of overthrowing Arminianism, he would have overthrown his own system on the nature of virtue." p. 59. Here again, Dr. Tyler confounds a "primary cause" with a governing principle. "Love to being in general," according to Edwards, is the governing principle in every virtuous action. But the *reason* or "primary cause" why we thus love any object, (e. g. the glory of God and the general good,) is, as we have just seen, because it is "*grateful,*"—because it is regarded as a "*good,*" or a source of happiness.

Dr. Tyler goes on to say, "If the reviewer's principle is correct, there is no such thing as disinterested love." We may here appeal to Dr. Hopkins, whom Dr. Tyler has followed in confounding the *terms* self-love and selfishness, and who still, agrees with us as to the *things* affirmed. He says, "A person may have and exercise a proper regard *for himself,* and *desire* and seek his own interest and happiness, without the least degree of that self-love (selfishness) which is opposed to disinterested benevolence." "By *many* there is not a proper distinction made, and *kept in view,* be-

* Works, Vol. II. p. 425.

tween self-love (selfishness) and that regard which the benevolent person *must* have for himself, and his interest and happiness, which is necessarily included in disinterested affection.”*

Dr. Dwight is equally explicit. We refer to the 80th Sermon of his Theology, which was written chiefly to answer an objection against christianity, as urged by the celebrated infidel, Lord Shaftsbury. This writer did not indeed deny the possibility of man’s acting, as a moral being, from a simple desire of happiness. He however maintained, that to be influenced by reward or punishment, was mercenary, mean, and *selfish!* Let us then hear Dr. Dwight, on the general question between Dr. Tyler and the Christian Spectator. He says, “In aiming at our own happiness, *there is no necessary selfishness.*”—“When virtue itself is *desired*, it is desired only for the enjoyment which it furnishes. Were there no such objects in the universe,” (enjoyment, and deliverance from suffering,) “there would be no such thing as *desire*, and consequently no such thing as *volition* or *action*. Percipient beings, and among them intelligent beings, would be as absolutely *inactive* as so many lumps of matter. But according to Lord Shaftsbury, *to regard future enjoyment or misery*, and for the very same reason, to regard them when present, is to be mean and mercenary, and to cease from being virtuous. He who regards them, therefore, cannot be virtuous; he who *does not*, must of course be a block.” Dr. Dwight proceeds: “*Not* to regard enjoyment and suffering, when present to our view, is *physically impossible*. In order to be virtuous, then, we must in every instance, accomplish a physical impossibility.” If Dr. Dwight had been writing against Dr. Tyler himself, we see not how he could have been more explicit.

We would not insinuate, nor do we in the remotest degree apprehend, that Dr. Tyler is in danger of following his principle, into its legitimate consequences. But if Dr. Tyler can adopt a principle which, by legitimate consequence, would subvert christianity, without applying it to that purpose, we surely may *deny* that principle, along with Edwards, Hopkins, and Dwight, without “subverting the doctrines of grace.”

Here we might leave the subject; for nearly every argument and objection of Dr. Tyler, must stand or fall with his assumption, that “every moral being, destitute of benevolence, and actuated by self-love, is *necessarily* a selfish being.” If this position cannot be maintained—if man, as a moral agent, *can* be actuated by a simple desire of happiness, then that desire, through grace, may cause the suspension of the selfish principle; and may thus prepare the way for that act of choice, in which God is taken as the portion of the soul. Nor, as we have repeatedly said, does this complex act

* System, Vol. I. pp. 351, 547.

of suspension and resulting choice, suppose any *measurable* duration. It may be as instantaneous as the "complex" and "intelligent" acts, which are stated by Dr. Tyler, to exist in *every* case of volition. All his questions, therefore, respecting the possibility, and the mode of *suspending* the selfish principle, are set aside at once. All his objections respecting "progressive regeneration," are as applicable to the "complex act" of choice described by Dr. Tyler, as to the one described by us.

We cannot but regret, that Dr. Tyler did not meet us on the real point at issue. He denied the possibility of any using of the means of regeneration, on the part of sinners. It became him, therefore, to show, (in opposition to our arguments,) that it is possible, in the nature of things, for the mind to pass from the supreme love of the world, to the supreme love of God, without any of those intervening mental acts, which involve the suspension of the selfish principle. It became him to show, that one object (as God) can become to the mind the greatest apparent good, and be actually chosen; while, in the strictest cotemporaneousness, another object (as the world) is likewise viewed as the greatest apparent good, and is actually chosen also. It became him to show, (for he denies any intervening suspension in the case,) that selfishness and benevolence are, in the strictest sense, co-existing states of mind in the renewed sinner—that, from three absolute impossibilities, selfishness neither does nor can cease from the mind, even in the order of nature, before holy love takes possession of the soul. This, we say, is the real point at issue. And this position, Dr. Tyler must defend, on other grounds than that for a sinner to desire to be happy, is *necessarily* sinful and damning to the soul. Had Dr. Tyler addressed himself to the argument, and attempted to meet it by direct reasoning, instead of assuming a philosophical principle, which is rejected by the most respectable theologians of New-England, as well as by infallible common sense, he would not, we think, on the one hand, have so strangely misinterpreted our language, in the face of our formal definitions, and explicit denials of what he charges upon us; nor on the other, have subverted with his own hand, every main principle he has adopted, or have conceded every position and conclusion, which he undertook to impugn.

IV. We now pass, to consider more at large, the principal OBJECTIONS which Dr. Tyler has urged against our review. These, we apprehend, result from two sources: the one is a false philosophy respecting the nature of moral agency; the other, that Dr. Tyler has not sufficiently reflected on the comprehensiveness and rapidity of the mental operation, involved in the case. His error in respect to moral agency, we have attempted to show, under our last head. He denies, that there is in the sinner, considered as a moral agent, any principle of mental action, except the selfish prin-

ciple. He has formed too, we think, very inadequate views of the comprehensiveness and rapidity of the mental operation in question. Hence the difficulties which he finds in admitting the process described. He should remember, however, that the case reasoned upon, is that of a sinner, who has been instructed in all the knowledge requisite to the performance of duty. He should reflect how rapidly known truths may become the object of recurring thought;—how the mind may at once embrace them in a single view, or call them up as objects of contemplation. Dr. Tyler may thus see how God and the world, the nature of duty and the evil of sin, with the interests of eternity, may instantly, and together, possess the mind, as objects of thought and of feeling. How instantaneously this entire mental process may take place, will be seen, by reflecting on any analogous case of a change in the common concerns of life. When a man, for instance, is encountered by danger “in her lion walk,” how easy is it to see, that the voluntary act of turning from it, may be analyzed, into numerous specific acts, which may all be traced to the ever wakeful principle of self-preservation. Even to describe *analytically*, the complex act of relinquishing his present object of pursuit, and resolving on flight, might require a period many hundred times as long as the act itself. But who can doubt, whether the reasons for relinquishing the pursuit, were actually in the mind, and were compared with the reasons for continuing it? Who can doubt, whether a known place of refuge at hand, with the motives for fleeing to it, was not thought of and chosen? Who will deny, that this entire mental process, may be traced to the ever active principle of self-preservation; or who will question, whether that process is instantaneous, because it can be analyzed into numerous and varied acts of thought and feeling?

Now all that we claim is, that a mental process, similar to this, takes place, in the “complex act” of turning to God. We claim that this mental process, which is *possible* to man as a moral agent, does in fact *substantially* take place, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, in every instance of regeneration. We say, *substantially*. For, as we do not suppose the resulting act of love to be perfect in degree, according to the divine law; so neither do we suppose, that *any* part of the process, is in the strictest sense perfect, compared with the powers and capacities of man, as a moral agent. On the contrary, we suppose such imperfection in this respect, that without the influence of the Spirit on the mind, the final act would not take place; but that the sinner, as at first, would choose the world, and not God, as his supreme good. We did not undertake to decide upon *the degree* of intellectual perception, and excited feeling, which exists in each case of regeneration. What we attempted to do, is this: to show that the *class* or *kind* of mental

acts dictated by self-love, constitute using the means of regeneration, as distinguished from that *class or kind of acts which are dictated by the selfish principle*. Not, indeed, that they constitute a using of these means, when existing, as they may exist, in a very *low degree*, or when modified, weakened, and counteracted, (as they may be,) by various causes. Accordingly, we were very careful to distinguish this class of acts in their different degrees. And we stated expressly, though Dr. Tyler denies that we have done so, that they may be in *kind*, what we described them to be, and yet may be so modified by circumstances, and so imperfect *in degree*, as to result in a more absolute confirmation in iniquity. Vid. pp. 222, 230. Indeed, we see no reason to deny, that of two individuals under these states of mind in the *same degree*, one may be, and the other not be, regenerated. But we maintain, that without this *class or kind of mental acts existing in some degree*, as *distinguished* from those which are dictated by the selfish principle; regeneration cannot take place, according to the laws of voluntary and moral action.

Further, we implied in our explanatory remarks, (p. 19,) that if any choose, when they speak of using the means of regeneration, to include under the term *regeneration*, the renunciation of the selfish principle or "the putting off of the old man," as well the final act of the heart, or the "putting on of the new man," we had no objection. If on the other hand they confine the word, as we have done, to the act of the will or heart in loving God, in accordance with common theological usage, and chiefly "for the sake of convenient phraseology," the case is not altered. It must still be true, (if the change in regeneration is a voluntary act,) that it implies those acts and states of mind, viz. perception, thought, and feeling, which result from the constitutional desire of happiness; which involve the suspension of the selfish principle; and which cannot therefore be dictated by that principle. No man ever did, or ever can, think of *renouncing* the very object of selfish affection, and of taking God for his portion, in order to subserve a selfish purpose. And surely none will suppose that the world will ever be renounced, or God be loved, by the man who never *thinks* of doing either.

Nor is it possible, that while one object *continues* to be chosen as the supreme good, the opposite object should also be chosen, by a *co-existing* act, as the supreme good. To renounce the selfish principle is therefore one thing,—to choose God as our portion is another. Otherwise the man would both choose and not choose—would be both selfish and benevolent—totally depraved and yet holy, in the same act. He would in the strictest sense, "be divided against himself,"—an absurdity, we still think, sufficiently palpable to silence even Jewish caviling.

The distinction which we made between the renunciation of the selfish principle and the act of the heart in loving God, is neither unusual, nor unscriptural. There is such a thing, as "ceasing to do evil," in distinction from "learning to do well:" Isa. i. 16, 17. There is a "casting away all your transgressions," in distinction from "making a new heart and a new spirit:" Ezek. xviii. 31. There is a "taking away the heart of stone," in distinction from "giving a heart of flesh:" Ezek. xxxvi. 26. There is a "not loving the world, neither the things that are in the world," in distinction from "the love of the Father;" nor can the love of the one strictly *co-exist* with the love of the other, for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:" 1 John, ii. 15. There is a "putting off the old man," in distinction from "putting on the new man:" Eph. iv. 22, 24, Col. iii. 9, 10. Now we explicitly stated, that there is no interval of time to be admitted, between the one and the other mental act. Both acts, as we have already stated, may in some modes of speaking be comprised under the term *regeneration*, or the phrase "a new creature." Vid. particularly 2 Cor. v. 17. But it is no unreasonable metaphysical refinement to distinguish these mental acts, and to exhibit the one as prior *in the order of nature* to the other. It is a mode of speaking which inspired men have adopted as well as we; and which makes them therefore as proper objects of Dr. Tyler's animadversions as ourselves. Let him correct Paul's use of terms, and then will we stand corrected.

We shall now pass to consider, in the first place, Dr. Tyler's objections relative to the *suspension* of the selfish principle; as distinguished from that resulting act of the *will*, in which God is chosen as the portion of the soul. These objections are stated chiefly in the form of interrogations.

"If God by an act of his grace suspends the selfish principle, what is this but regeneration?" p. 16. We answer, that regeneration in its *comprehensive* sense may denote both "the putting off the old man," and "the putting on the new." In this sense therefore Dr. Tyler's question is, whether a part is the same thing with the whole. Regeneration in the *restricted*, theological sense, (in which we expressly said, we used it when speaking of the *means* of regeneration) denotes the *first* act of the will in giving the soul to God. In this sense therefore, Dr. Tyler's question is, whether two distinct acts are still the same—whether to cease is the same as to begin—whether the apostle was erroneous in distinguishing between "putting off the old man," and "putting on the new."

"Does the sinner, while under the control of supreme selfishness, and consequently from a selfish motive, resolve not to be selfish?" p. 16. Certainly not, as we stated in the fullest manner. But divine truth, urged home upon the soul by the Holy Spirit,

may appeal so strongly to the sinner's sense of danger and desire of happiness, as to suspend the control of the selfish principle, *in this act of fixed attention to his real interests*. The possibility of this, can be denied only on Dr. Tyler's assumption, (which we have already examined) that self-love and selfishness are identically the same, in the breasts of unrenewed men. As to the *fact* of such a suspension of the selfish principle, we may turn Dr. Tyler's question on himself. Since man cannot "from a selfish motive" "resolve not to be selfish," how can he "from a selfish motive" begin to love God or actually do so? If the selfish principle then is not first suspended in some way, it is impossible for him, in the nature of things, ever to love God. Now we refer this suspension, under grace, to the operation of the desire of happiness. As Dr. Tyler discards this explanation, he has only to show, how it can take place "from selfish motives."

Dr. Tyler proceeds, "Is the selfish principle suspended without any act of the mind?" p. 16. Certainly not. It is suspended in the act of voluntary attention to truth, prompted by a regard to happiness. Again Dr. Tyler says "if the selfish principle is suspended by a voluntary act of the mind, this must be a moral act." p. 16. We answer, that the sinner, to perform a right moral act, must *both* renounce the world, and choose God. Moral character or quality can be predicated only of the whole "complex act," and not of a part. If there is any difficulty on this point, it belongs to the apostle's statements no less than to our's. Is not "putting off the old man" as much a *voluntary* act as "putting on the new?" But is the former taken by *itself* a "moral act?" Does it constitute its subject "a new creature in Christ?"

But Dr. Tyler says again, "Who will affirm that any act of the mind dictated by selfishness, has a tendency to suspend selfishness?" p. 17. We think, no one. But a regard to happiness may, under divine influence, prompt the sinner to turn his thoughts from every object of selfish pursuit, to the things of his peace. Dr. Tyler again says, "But what is the moral character of the man *after* the suspension of the selfish principle, and *previous* to regeneration?" p. 17. This question proceeds wholly on the assumption, that there is, an *interval of time*, between the suspension of the selfish principle, and the final act of the will or heart in regeneration. How explicitly and abundantly we have denied such an interval, Dr. Tyler must have known. He must have known, in what sense we used all those terms and phrases, on which the question concerning time or duration depends;—that we did *not* use them to denote priority or succession in the order of *time*, but simply *in the order of nature*. We said, "that the progress of thought and feeling is often as rapid as that of light; and we no more intend to affirm any *measurable* duration between the first

and the last act of the series, than when we say, the sun must exist *before* it can shine." We illustrated the difference of meaning which the words "before," "after," "immediate," etc. have in different connections. We affirmed the propriety and truth, of speaking of the "entire series of acts as cotemporaneous; as constituting ONE ACT, the *immediate* performance of which is required of the sinner." pp. 18, and 488. We shall have occasion to advert to Dr. Tyler's erroneous statements on this point hereafter. The simple question now is, whether it is not entirely proper to distinguish, (as the scriptures do, and as we shall see Dr. Tyler does,) different mental acts, as successive in the order of nature, which are not so, in the order of time. If so, then Dr. Tyler's question amounts to this: what is a man's moral character when he is employed for an indivisible moment in the very act of performing his duty, *before* it is performed; or what is his character *after* duty is begun, and *before* it is finished.* Dr. Tyler admits the act of perception, or apprehension of the divine excellence, to be necessary to the act of loving God. He admits the one to be the *cause* or *reason* of the other; (pp. 13, and 38 :) and that the act of preference, is "consequent" on the mind's view of the greater good. p. 59. Now we ask, what is the moral character of the man *after* the commencement of the act of "perception" or "mind's view" of the object, and *before* the act of the will? If Dr. Tyler says, such questions are the height of absurdity, why then does he ask them? If what he has described as explicitly as we have, to be a "complex act," including an act of intellect, as well as the act of the will or heart, may be, as he maintains, *instantaneous*, and thus render all questions which imply duration in the process, impertinent, and absurd; so for precisely the same reason are such questions impertinent and absurd, as applied to what we have also described as instantaneous.

To proceed then with Dr. Tyler's questions and answers, which are founded wholly on this unauthorized assumption, and in face of repeated and formal denials of the thing assumed. He says, "Is he holy? No. Is he sinful? No. Then he cannot be a moral agent.† And how has his moral agency ceased? Has he lost his reason? No. Has he ceased to act? No. *He is using the means of regeneration.*" If ridicule is proper at all on such a subject, it is

* Dr. Tyler esteems the following remark of Edwards "worthy of serious consideration." "In them that are totally corrupt, there can be no tendency towards their making their hearts better, *till they begin* to repent of the badness of their hearts." Why did not Dr. Tyler ask, what their moral character would be *after they began* to repent, and *before they had actually repented*?

† We beg leave here to refer Dr. Tyler, to Webster's definition of the word *moral*, in the phrase "moral agent;" viz. "subject to the moral law, and capable of moral actions."

wholly out of place here. The *truth of God* is the means of regeneration. If the sinner is using that truth *in the act of obeying it*, (and nothing short of this, did we admit to be a using of the means in question) what we ask can he better do? If he is actually performing his duty for the first time, what can be required of him in its place? We might turn the question upon Dr. Tyler, and ask: while the sinner is "*apprehending* the excellence of the divine character," while he is *regarding* it as the greater good, prior to the "consequent" preference, what is he doing? Is he holy? Then is he holy, before he is holy. Is he sinning? Then sin is necessary to holiness. It remains for him to inform us, whether these acts which are necessary, as he tells us, to the act of the will, as the ground or reason of it, proceed "from a holy heart or a sinful heart, or no heart at all?"

But let us hear Dr. Tyler still farther. He says, "Is the selfish principle suspended by the interposition of God or by an act of the sinner. Not by the act of the sinner; for if I understand the reviewer, he supposes that those mental acts which constitute the using of the means of regeneration, precede the act of divine interposition." p. 16. Now, in our second number, we unequivocally referred the suspension and final cessation of the selfish principle to the Spirit of God, operating through divine truth. Speaking of the tendencies of that truth, we said, "when, *by the strivings of the SPIRIT*, they are perpetuated and increased, then it is that the *selfish principle* not only suffers temporary *suspensions*, but grows weaker and weaker, in each instance of its returning activity and dominion: until at some *point* before the heart fixes on God, the power and influence of this principle wholly *CEASE* from the mind." p. 228. Could a stronger declaration be framed, that the suspension referred to, results from "the interposition of God?" Again, on page 223, we said, "Nor do we intend to imply, that the *strivings of the Divine Spirit* are not *necessary* to overcome *counteracting tendencies*, and to continue that process of fixed contemplation and deepening emotion, which are requisite to a change of heart." Is not "the selfish principle" the *great* "counteracting tendency" to the influence of divine truth? In our concluding number we again stated, in direct terms, that the selfish principle is suspended "by the influence of the divine Spirit." It is therefore with no little surprise and regret, that we find Dr. Tyler so eager and determined to fasten upon us the imputation of denying, what we have explicitly declared to be our firm belief. His charge is founded on a single passage in our first number, which we give below.* Whether the construction which Dr. Tyler has

* All that our present object requires us to say on these topics is, that regeneration in the popular import of the term is an event which depends on the

put upon that passage when taken by itself, is natural or not; ordinary candor should have induced him to accept our subsequent declarations on this subject, as decisive evidence that we did not mean what he supposed us to say. What we intended to state in that sentence, will be obvious from a brief explanation. In our view, as we have shown, regeneration in the widest and most *comprehensive* sense of the term is *all* dependent on divine interposition. Regeneration in its *restricted* sense, is of course dependent on that interposition. Now, if any one should choose to embrace under regeneration in its *restricted* sense, more than we had done, (i. e. more than the final act of the will,) we had no objection. And to meet this case our sentence was framed. We therefore said, that "*whatsoever* part" (not *here* deciding how much) of regeneration in the *comprehensive* sense, "is produced by divine interposition," still "*some* part of the process" (to wit, some part of regeneration in the *comprehensive* sense) "is preliminary to such (i. e. *divine*) interposition" in "*that* which in the LIMITED use of the word may be called regeneration." In other words, that some acts comprehended under regeneration in its *widest* sense, must be "preliminary" to the act of God which produces regeneration in any *restricted* sense of the term. Those acts therefore we said were properly a using of the means of regeneration. But we did not say, as Dr. Tyler makes us, that "they precede the act of divine interposition." We only said that they were preliminary to *that* "act of divine interposition" which secures regeneration in the *restricted* sense of the term. And we elsewhere affirmed, that they *all* sprung from such interposition. But says Dr. Tyler, "Does the reviewer mean that there are two acts of divine interposition in the same indivisible moment?" We answer, that we have supposed it to accord with theological usage, to distinguish the strivings of the Spirit, from the renewing act of the Spirit. Does Dr. Tyler still ask, how there can be two acts in the same indivisible moment? We ask him, how there can be, as he represents the fact to be, two acts of the sinner, viz. "an intelligent act," and "an act of the will or heart," and yet the "complex act" be "instantaneous?"

But says Dr. Tyler, "How is the selfish principle suspended? On this point, the reviewer has given us no information." p. 15.

interposition of the Holy Spirit;—that it *so* depends on this interposition, that whatsoever part of that process of mental acts and states which, in the popular use of the term, constitute regeneration, is produced by this divine interposition, *some part* of the process is preliminary to such interposition, and preliminary also to that which, in the limited use of the word, may be called regeneration; and that whatever acts be regarded as thus preliminary, they are to be regarded and spoken of either as using the means of grace, or as using the means of regeneration. p. 19.

We confess, that we hardly know what to say in respect to this assertion. We stated so explicitly, and in so many forms, that the suspension of the selfish principle is to be traced (under God) to *self-love* or the desire of happiness, as appealed to by divine truth,* that we must leave it with Dr. Tyler to explain his peremptory denial of this plain matter of fact. Should he say that he did not understand us in this case, to be accounting for the suspension of the selfish principle, we ask him, why he did not? Did we not in fact thus account for it?

Perhaps however Dr. Tyler *meant* to say, that we have given no information on this point, which is *satisfactory to him*. This we can easily account for. Let us, for example, suppose the *avaricious* principle to suffer momentary suspensions in the breast of a miser; and the result to be, that he does occasionally a generous act. Let us imagine some one to account for this fact, by saying that very powerful appeals were made, in these cases, to the miser's feelings of tenderness and compassion. Now it is easy to see that this explanation would be wholly unsatisfactory to any one, who had previously assumed that no such feelings did or could exist in the miser's bosom—that all his actions were to be resolved into the single principle of avarice. Thus Dr. Tyler, in his philosophy, constantly assumes, that there is no principle of mental action in the mind of sinners, except the selfish principle. He is therefore utterly unable to see *how* any other principle can occasion the mental acts and states, which have been specified; and when it is expressly stated, and abundantly proved, that some other principle does occasion them, "no information is given on the point," because, on Dr. Tyler's philosophy, the fact cannot be explained. Let him re-consider his views as to the essential properties of a moral agent; let him admit that man is such an agent, in respect to every natural qualification to obey his Maker, let him admit that the laws of moral action are not violated in regeneration, and his philosophical difficulties will vanish. He will then see that in order to a sinner's acting right in the *first* instance, it is not necessary that he should act "with a holy heart, or a sinful heart, or no heart at all;" but simply with the powers and properties of a moral agent.

Will Dr. Tyler then maintain, that it is physically impossible so to divest any object of present affection, of its attractions, by an assurance from God of infinitely greater good in Himself; and so to invest it with the appalling evils which the love of it involves, as to vacate the mind, even for a moment, of all its influence? Cannot the Holy Spirit so affect and use the powers and susceptibilities of the human mind, that when such truth as God's truth is presented

* Vid. pp. 32, 3, and 226—8.

to the mind, the effect now supposed shall be associated with the exhibition? Cannot He, whose prerogative it is to transform the heart itself, so throw over the object of the sinner's affections, the terrors of coming vengeance, that that object shall cease to dictate those acts and states which next occupy the mind? Is there no *possible* way in which this suspension of the selfish principle can be accomplished? If not, then how can the heart *ever* exercise holy love? If the selfish principle *must* dictate every mental act or state, then either selfishness must dictate holy love, i. e. enmity itself must love, or love is utterly impossible. In a word, if love is ever produced in the heart of the sinner, it must either be dictated by the selfish principle; or that principle must cease to act, i. e. must be suspended, in the *order of nature*, prior to the exercise of love.

We shall now avail ourselves of the aid of Dr. Tyler himself. Speaking of the manner in which the change in regeneration is produced, he says, "he (the sinner) *now* loves, what *before* he hated." "In his *last* act of rebellion, he was a moral agent. In his *first* act of obedience, he is a moral agent." p. 41. Is not this saying in the most explicit terms, that the *last* act of rebellion had existed and *ceased*, *before* the *first* act of obedience was rendered? *Now* he loves, what *before* he hated," says Dr. Tyler. How could this be, if the hatred, the act of rebellion, had not been *renounced*, and had not actually *ceased* from the mind? Vid. also, p. 30.

We have here a striking instance of what frequently occurs, that facts which are denied and argued against, when regarded as subversive of preconceived opinions, are still shown to constitute an unalterable part of the mind's belief, in him who denies them. These facts or truths are so well known, that though expressly denied in one connection, they will be asserted and reasoned upon in another, without awakening the consciousness of self-contradiction. This, we believe to be the true solution of a man's so often arguing as to facts in one way, and stating them in another.

We now pass, in the second place, to consider Dr. Tyler's SEVEN QUERIES, which are designed to present in a single view, what he maintains to be the "legitimate consequences" of our system. These we shall examine in order.

1. In the first, he charges us with representing regeneration, as "a gradual and progressive work." p. 27. Now we stated that regeneration, in the *restricted* and theological import of the word, is a *simple* act. Dr. Tyler will not therefore pretend, that in *this* sense of the term, we did or could represent regeneration as "gradual and progressive." But we have shown that theologians do generally represent moral action as belonging *exclusively* to acts of the will. It follows therefore that "the commencement of holiness," i. e. regeneration, is considered by theologians to be, what we described it, "a simple act." In other words, they use the

term in its *restricted* import. Why then does Dr. Tyler charge us with denying regeneration to be “an instantaneous change in the sense in which it has ever been understood to be instantaneous by calvinists?” Can any thing be more instantaneous than a simple act? Is it not on this very ground that Dr. Griffin, and others, have declared regeneration to be instantaneous?

But Dr. Tyler maintains that, as we embrace “the using of the means” under regeneration in the *comprehensive* sense of the term, we do in fact make regeneration gradual and progressive. But has he rightly apprehended the nature of those acts, which we described as a using of the means in question? When we affirmed that regeneration never takes place without the solemn contemplation of divine truth, we maintained that this contemplation does not belong to that class of mental acts which are dictated by the selfish principle. We then pointed to another class—to acts resulting from a simple desire of happiness, and stated, that in *this* class alone, were those acts to be found, which constitute a using of the means in question. But did we affirm or intimate, that *all* acts belonging even to this class, were a using of these means? Far from it. On the contrary, in a formal statement, (p. 16,) we confined this “using of means” to *acts DIRECTLY associated with a change of the will or heart, whenever that change takes place*. We made those acts a *part* of regeneration in the comprehensive import of the term; and declared that in union with this change of the will or heart, they constitute “*one act*,” which involves no measurable duration, and which takes place “in a moment of time.”* According to this limitation, (had we said nothing more,) we were authorized to expect our subsequent language to be understood. Were we led, for example, in analyzing this complex act, to make use of terms which, in themselves considered, would imply succession or duration of time. We had guarded against misconception on this point. The act, though complex, we had described as instantaneous; and stated the using of the means in question, to be *directly* associated with a change of the will or heart.

But Dr. Tyler cites various passages, and says “they evidently describe a series of acts and states which cannot be regarded as simultaneous.” Be it so. But in these passages, without exception, we were speaking of acts, (and the passages themselves show the fact most clearly,) which are so *imperfect in degree* through counteracting influences, that instead of resulting in regeneration and becoming the means of it, they often result in a more absolute confirmation in iniquity. Vid. pp. 222, 227, 696. The error of Dr. Tyler, in these instances consists in representing us as maintaining that *all* acts or states of mind dicta-

* By the phrase “in a moment of time,” we mean, what we suppose Dr. Tyler to mean, when he says “as instantaneous as any voluntary act, can be supposed to be.” p. 13. An instance of the correct use of this phrase, which may illustrate our meaning, occurs in Luke iv. 5.

ted by self-love, or a regard to happiness, however counteracted by selfishness, constitute using the means of regeneration. And this he does, regardless entirely of our express and formal denials of this fact. He does it too in equal disregard of our explicit distinction between this kind of acts, when existing in a *low* degree, as not constituting, and when existing in a *higher degree*, as constituting "a using of the means of regeneration." p. 232. Dr. Tyler says, "The whole course of his (the reviewer's) argument is to prove from their *tendency*, that the acts of which he speaks, (whether counteracted or not, whether invariably connected with regeneration or not,) do constitute using the means of regeneration." p. 54. We ask the reader to refer to the whole course of argument, and particularly to the argument from the tendency of these acts, on p. 222. Our leading object was to show, that acts which are dictated by a regard to happiness, (in distinction from those dictated by the selfish principle) are of that KIND which constitute "a using of the means of regeneration." Accordingly arguing from the *tendency* of the acts dictated by self-love, we stated (for the very purpose of guarding against Dr. Tyler's misapprehension,) that this kind of acts and states, may be so enfeebled, checked, and counteracted, as to result in a more absolute confirmation in iniquity." We stated that "the mind is capable of opposite tendencies at the same time,"—that "the strivings of the Spirit are necessary to overcome counteracting tendencies," and that they are increased by His influence, until *at some point* before the heart fixes on God, the power and influence of the selfish principle, wholly cease from the mind." Speaking of these thoughts and feelings as existing under counteracting influences, we said "they are the very thoughts and feelings in *kind*, which in their progressive *degrees*,* we have described as constituting the means of regeneration." How then could Dr. Tyler suppose, that we meant to maintain, that acts which we said never did result in regeneration, were the means of it? And yet he says, that the whole course of our argument is to prove that the acts of which we speak, whether *counteracted or not*, constitute using the means of regeneration!—Farther, we said in our concluding number, with reference to such passages, "that we did in *form* make a dis-

* Dr. Tyler, in quoting this passage, italicises the word "*progressive*," as though it had something to do with the order of time. And not only so, he seems to suppose that the *kind* of acts in question, whenever they become the means of regeneration, are represented by us, as in a state of progress, or as *then* progressing in degree. This was not our meaning. We had been speaking of the sinner under the clear exhibitions of divine truth, as conscious of this *kind* of acts and states of mind; and as also conscious, that they would increase in degree, did he not resist the truth. When, then, we spoke of this kind of acts as those which in their *progressive degree*, constitute using the means of regeneration, we meant simply, that when existing in *some* of those higher degrees, in which, by a previous progress *in fact*, they often come to exist, they then constitute using the means of regeneration. If Dr. Tyler thinks, that such is not the fair import of our language, we can only say, that we think it admits of no other.

inction between that kind of mental acts, which, when *counteracted* by opposite mental tendencies does not, and when *uncounteracted* does constitute using the means of regeneration ;” and that it is only when the selfish principle ceases to predominate in the soul, that in the proper sense of the phrase, the sinner ever uses the means of regeneration.” p. 694. Why then did he persist to the last in representing us, as maintaining that these acts, whether counteracted by the selfish principle or not, constitute using the means of regeneration? We need not say how groundless is this attempt to support the charge of progressive regeneration !

But Dr. Tyler in one instance cites a passage, in which we spoke of the process of acts, consisting in the conviction, that the highest happiness is to be found in God, and in the engrossing contemplation of the realities which truth discloses, etc.,—of the contemplation as persevered in with *direct* effort to fix the heart on God; and also of entering on the process as one not to be abandoned, until the change should be accomplished. p. 32. This Dr. Tyler considers as describing a process, occupying “no inconsiderable portion of time.” In such language however we are justified by scriptural usage, “Strive”—*agonize*—to enter in at the strait gate.” “The kingdom of heaven suffereth *violence*, and the violent *take it by force*.” Such expressions in their ordinary import, denote beyond all question, *prolonged* effort. They are used here from the imperfection of language. Great difficulties are, in most cases, surmounted only by *protracted* as well as intense exertion. The difficulty to be overcome by the sinner, ought not, and need not occupy a moment in its removal. Yet in urging him to the effort, and in describing the state of mind which it supposes, we can employ no terms, which have not been ordinarily associated with the idea of prolonged duration. But they are freely used; and we have a right to expect that they will be understood according to the great principle of interpreting language; to wit, in conformity with the *known* or *declared* nature of the thing described. When we spoke therefore of the sinner’s “*persevering* in the effort” to give his heart to God, we pointed him to a class of acts, (viz. those dictated by a desire of happiness) from which alone, that result could be expected. But we did not direct or authorize him to perform those acts, in that low degree in which they are not associated with the change of the will or heart. On the contrary, we called him to the “*direct effort*” of giving his soul to God. We called upon him not to relax or abandon it, but to “strive”—to persevere. And we added, though Dr. Tyler has omitted this part of our statement, that he might be *instantly* successful. We said, “he may become a child of God, while truth and duty are PRESENT in his thoughts.”

Does Dr. Tyler say, that if the *simple* act of the will be instantaneous, then the complex act cannot be, we answer that usage, the only arbiter of the question, will justify this use of language. We say so on the principle of Dr. Tyler himself, that "a complex act" *may* be properly said to be "instantaneous." We say so on the principle, that if succession of time be supposed at all in such a case, the period is so short as to be regarded and spoken of as *indivisible*. When we say, for example, that the entrance of the first ray of light into a dungeon is instantaneous, who would infer, that the entrance of the *two* first, though successive rays, was not also instantaneous? But we will not pursue so trivial a question; as if the duration of a voluntary act, were really measurable by a chronometer. We simply ask, and this is the real question, in *what* sense have orthodox divines, maintained the instantaneousness of regeneration, in which we have not?

We again appeal to scriptural authority; and we ask what language have we used on this subject, which has not its exact counterpart in the word of God. Did we speak of thoughtfulness? "I *thought* on my ways, and turned," etc. Ps. cxix. 59. Did we enjoin consideration? "Because he *considereth*, and turneth away from his transgressions." Ezek. xviii. 28. Did we exhort to effort? "*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate." "*Labor* not for the meat that perisheth, but for that," etc. Luke xiii. 24, John vi. 27. Did we speak of perseverance? "The kingdom of heaven suffereth *violence*, and the violent *take it by force*." "The kingdom of God is preached and every man *presseth* into it." Math. xi. 22, Luke xvi. 16. Did we describe acts and doings? "They will not *frame* their *doings* to turn unto their God." Hos. v. 4. Did we speak of consideration and comparison, resulting in the renunciation of a present course, and the adoption of another? "When he came to himself he said, how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father." Luke xv. 17, 18.

To a still greater extent do metaphysical writers use similar phraseology. President Edwards in his treatise on the will, analyzes instantaneous acts, into extended processes of thought and feeling. Dr. Brown has carried this analysis still farther. Whole pages are filled with a specification or description of acts, which yet in their combined state are *simultaneous*. Nothing for example can be more instantaneous than the sensation of sight. Yet Dr. Brown says, "To open the eyes at present, is not to have a single simple feeling; it is as it were, to have *innumerable* feelings." Such states of mind he constantly describes by the obnoxious term "*process*;" and his language, on almost every page, if understood as Dr. Tyler has interpreted ours, would imply that years are consumed in a momentary train of thought.

On this point we now appeal to Dr. Tyler himself. He maintains, that love to God,—conversion, or “the first moral act of the new-born soul,” is ‘a complex act,’ and that it *includes* an act of the intellect, as well as the act of the will or heart.” He speaks of ‘intelligence and a perception of the object as necessary, to every voluntary act;’ p. 13;—of “a *sense* of the intrinsic excellence of the divine character;”—‘of truth as showing to the sinner (which implies his perceiving) his true character and condition;’—‘of all the sensibilities of the soul awakened;’—and ‘of these as prior to the interposition of the Spirit of God, to save, and of course to the right act of the will or heart.’ p. 36, and 46. If then we maintain that regeneration or conversion is a complex act, so does Dr. Tyler. If we maintain that some acts and states of mind are prior to the act of the will or heart, as necessary to it and included in regeneration, so does Dr. Tyler. If by affirming the *priority* of the one to the other, we inculcate the doctrine of progressive regeneration, so does Dr. Tyler.

Indeed it is wholly beyond our power to discover what acts or states of mind, we have specified as prior to the act of the will or heart in regeneration, and as necessary to it, which Dr. Tyler has not spoken of in the same manner, and with nearly the same explicitness. Thus we have seen his concession of the fact, that the selfish principle ceases before the act of love to God begins. In addition to the instance already cited, he exhibits it as the doctrine of calvinists, that ‘the first act of holy affection, immediately *succeeds* the last act of sin,’ p. 30; and on p. 13, he speaks ‘of the first moral act of the new-born soul, as a complex act including the perception of the intellect.’ Speaking of the prodigal he says, “*When he came to himself*, this madness of heart,—this desperation of purpose were gone. Every thing, now appeared to him in a new light. He had new views of his sins, and his obligations, etc.” p. 32. *When* had he these new views?—When “this madness of heart—this desperation of purpose were *gone*.” Have we not here then the suspension or renunciation of the selfish principle, *prior* in the order of *nature* to new views; and prior to the first moral act of the new-born soul, which is itself an intelligent, and therefore a complex act?

He also maintains as we have seen, that ‘love to God implies an apprehension of the excellence of his character, and is an intelligent act.’ p. 13. But surely, an act of this kind which does not include the apprehension of the *superior* excellence of its object to that of every other, can hardly be called *intelligent*. Here then we have, what we have called, acts of *consideration* and *comparison*.

We have farther seen, that Dr. Tyler asserts ‘a *sense* of the intrinsic excellence of God’s character, to be the motive which

prompts to the love of God.' p. 38. He states, that '*all* the sensibilities of the soul are awakened, (self-love is of course included) and that truth is *suited* to awaken them.'" p. 46. Of course there are constitutional sensibilities to be awakened—sensibilities to the objects, or motives which truth presents. Now these are acts and states of mind, which according to Dr. Tyler, exist prior to "the first moral act of the new-born soul;" and are even necessary to it, as the ground, or reason of it. Nor, as we have seen, can these acts, according to Dr. Tyler's declaration, be sinful. What more in respect to the reality, the relations, or the nature of these acts and states then, have we maintained, than Dr. Tyler himself unequivocally affirms? Was there ever, a more ample concession of every thing in debate?

Here we might dismiss the residue of Dr. Tyler's queries; for if he can answer them to his satisfaction on his own principles, he can on ours. We shall however briefly notice them.

2. The *second query* is, "whether the theory of the reviewer does not involve the inconsistency of supposing, that the heart is changed antecedent to regeneration;" as he adds in a note,—"*i. e.* in the restricted sense, before the work of regeneration is accomplished." He says, "when is the heart of the sinner changed, if not when he ceases to be supremely selfish?" We answer, *when he loves God*. In other words, he is a new creature, when "old things are passed away, *and* all things are become new." Dr. Tyler says again, "what is the heart of stone, which God promises to take away, if not a heart of supreme selfishness?" We ask what is "the heart of flesh," which he promises to give at the same time; and whether this is not necessary to a *change of heart*, especially in every sense in which we have used this phraseology. This query of Dr. Tyler, rests on the assumption, that the complex act of renouncing selfishness and taking God as our portion, cannot properly be spoken of in its parts; and this too, with a text of scripture in which it is done, directly before him. But Dr. Tyler himself says, "The sinner *now* loves, what *BEFORE* he hated." We return then Dr. Tyler's query to himself, by asking when is the heart of the sinner changed, if not when he ceases to hate and before he loves?

Dr. Tyler proceeds, "Why does the sinner need to be born again? Is it not because his heart is perverse and desperately wicked, etc. But this (the supreme selfishness of the heart,) the reviewer supposes to be removed, antecedent to regeneration." We answer, so does Dr. Tyler; "*Now* he loves, what *before* he hated." And we may ask, how (if the selfishness of the heart is a fatal obstacle to regeneration,) should we expect the change to take place, unless the obstacle be removed? Dr. Tyler adds, "consequently, the perverseness and obstinacy of the heart are

gone. He has sincere and intense desires to comply with the terms of mercy." Dr. Tyler knows, that in ascribing such desires to the sinner, we expressly defined them to be *constitutional* desires, *involuntary* states of mind, and not *moral*. pp. 25, and 229, 230. Why then does he represent us as meaning by such desires "a change of heart?" But as to the fact, that the perverseness and obstinacy of the heart are gone, *before* the complex act of loving God, Dr. Tyler asserts it, as unequivocally as ourselves.

"But the reviewer," says Dr. Tyler, "supposes that the sinner, antecedent to regeneration, discovers a reality and an excellence in the objects of holy affection.* And Dr. Tyler, as well as we, asserts 'that a *sense* of the intrinsic excellence of God's character, is the motive which prompts to the love of God,' p. 38, and that "love to God implies an apprehension of the excellence of his character." p. 13. But says Dr. Tyler, "if he discovers an excellence in the character of God, etc. is he not renewed in the temper of his mind?" p. 31. Dr. Tyler has that question to answer no less than we.

But we would turn upon Dr. Tyler his own query, 'whether his scheme does not involve the inconsistency of supposing that the heart may be changed, antecedent to regeneration?' He maintains, 'that if the word regeneration is ever used as synonymous with conversion, by calvinistic divines, it is used to denote the first moral act of the new-born soul, and that this is an *intelligent* act.' p. 13. But he also maintains, 'that a person *can* be regenerated in sleep or in a delirium.' p. 43. Suppose it should be so. Then either regeneration *in sleep* or in a *delirium*, would be an *intelligent* act, which is hardly credible; or there would be a change of heart, *before* regeneration in the calvinistic sense of the term. And how long *before*, would depend on the soundness of the sleep, in the one case, or of the duration of mental disease in the other.

3. Dr. Tyler's third query is, what becomes of the sinner's conviction of sin, *while* using the means of regeneration? We answer, there is no "while"—no measurable duration, in the case. But if he means where is the sinner's conviction of sin in the very *act* of doing his duty, we answer: he may have such conviction for his *past* guilt, but surely not for his *present* act of giving his heart to God.

4. The fourth query, "is whether the scheme of the Reviewer does not dispense with the necessity of divine influence in regeneration." The ground of this query is, that according to our scheme, "the perverseness and obstinacy of the heart are remov-

* How else could the sinner feel remorse of conscience?

ed, *before* the sinner is born of the Spirit." Equally so are they according to Dr. Tyler. "Now he loves, what *before* he hated." Does Dr. Tyler say, that he speaks of priority only in the order of nature? We did the same; and if this is a sufficient vindication for him, it is so for us. But no vindication can be necessary for either; since the process spoken of is one complex act, occupying no measurable duration.

5. The fifth query is, "whether the Reviewer does not represent the sinner as laboring under a natural inability to do his duty?" The reason for this query is thus stated: "When the selfish principle is suspended, the *moral inability* ceases. If then he is in any sense, unable to give his heart to God, it must be, that he has not sufficient natural power," etc. We return again to Dr. Tyler his own query; why does not the sinner labor under this natural inability *when* he ceases to hate, and *before* he loves,—or between "his last act of rebellion," and "his first act of obedience." Especially, why might it not be so, if the sinner should be *regenerated in sleep*? For in this case, unless the first act after regeneration, should be a sinful act, there might possibly be intervening hours, between the last act of rebellion and the first act of obedience. But if Dr. Tyler says, there is no interval between them, and that he speaks of priority *only* in the order of nature; so say we. And we only ask him to apply the golden rule, and vindicate us as he vindicates himself.

6. In the *sixth query* we are charged, in effect, with denying "the doctrine of sovereign distinguishing grace." The basis of this charge is this, "that there are means which the sinner must use, or he cannot be regenerated." Does not Dr. Tyler assert this as strongly as we do? He says, "that motives presented to the mind are *necessary* to the exercise of holy affections." p. 41. But in reference to this fact, he again asks, "why then is one renewed and not another?" It belongs as much to Dr. T. as to ourselves, to answer this question. We cannot see why it was asked at all. Does the act of the sinner in perceiving truth, (without which renewing grace will not be given) imply any obligation on the part of God to grant such grace? May he not still give or withhold his grace, as it "seemeth good in his sight?" Especially when the sinner will never even use these means without a divine influence?

Dr. Tyler, referring to our views respecting the tendency of divine truth, says, "I would now ask, in the language of the Apostle, *who maketh thee to differ*? Is it the sovereign purpose of God that makes the difference, or the purpose of the sinner, while yet unrenewed?" We cannot see the pertinency of this question. Suppose that the *tendency* of truth is to produce the conversion of the sinner. Does it follow that this tendency will not be forever re-

sisted and *counteracted*, without the sovereign interposition of God's grace? On our supposition, then it may be equally true, that God does more for one sinner, than for another; to wit, that which results in the conversion of one and not of another?

7. The "seventh query is, whether the scheme of the reviewer, if drawn out in detail, and inculcated by the teachers of religion, has not a direct tendency to stifle conviction of sin, and to produce spurious conversions?" What does Dr. Tyler mean by conviction of sin? Plainly some state of the mind previous to a change of heart. And what objection, ought *he* to make to stifling *such* conviction? He denies that there can be any but a *sinful* using of the means of grace, by the sinner. He tells us, that that the true convert does not "look upon his desires and efforts, which *preceded a change of heart*—but as entirely *selfish* and *in a high degree sinful*." p. 23. Why then does Dr. T. object to a scheme, which tends to stifle *sin*?

But it does not tend to stifle *true* conviction. It does indeed exclude that *sinful* conviction (which is necessary on Dr. Tyler's scheme) from the using of the means of regeneration. We accordingly pronounced it *abusing* these means. How such conviction differs from that which the sinner feels in using these means, Dr. Tyler would have readily understood had he not confounded the actings of self-love and selfishness. Thus when we speak of all the sensibilities of the mind as excited *by divine truth* and in view of its objects, and also, as uncounteracted by the selfish principle; does not the language describe *feeling* or conviction on the part of the sinner, in respect to his sin and his danger? Have we not again and again represented the sinner, when in the state referred to, as seeing and feeling himself to be a miserable transgressor,—his dread of misery as excited, his sensibility to life and death roused, with no hope except from divine mercy, &c.? Have we not expressly limited the using of the means of regeneration to those states of mind when divine truth, in the most impressive manner, and without counteraction from the selfish principle, so bears on the mind, as to be associated with the act of submission? What can be more desirable than such instantaneous acts and feelings of the sinner? Let the scheme which thus exhibits the subject, be compared with that, which necessarily implies *sinful* conviction. Who does not see that the one calls the sinner instantly to the performance of duty; and that the other insists, that he must sin, before duty is performed?

We ask Dr. Tyler now to suppose, that an impenitent sinner should, without any previous *sinful* conviction, as soon as it is possible to him as a moral agent, when called to duty, and from a regard to his well being in time and eternity, so think of himself as a sinner, of his guilt and danger,—so think of God and the things

of his peace—and so feel in view of these objects, as truth reveals them, as actually to renounce the world, and choose God as his portion; would this be a “spurious conversion?” And we ask, what is this but a summary of the views which we have advocated?

We pass now to consider what Dr. Tyler objects in the third place, viz. that “the reviewer seems to have fallen into a mistake in regard to the nature of the sinner’s objection” to entering on the immediate performance of his duty. We stated that to “refute a standing objection of many unrenewed men,” appeared to be an important end of discussing this subject. We distinguished *this* objection, from *another* very common objection, in the following manner: “This objection then is *not*, as it is *often* supposed to be, that the doctrine of dependence exempts the sinner from *the obligation* to ‘make him a new heart and a new spirit,’ but that it renders all *effort* to do this, on the part of the sinner, *useless*.” Dr. Tyler denies, that these two objections are thus distinguished, in the mind of the sinner. He admits however that sinners do actually make the objection in question, and plead “that there is no good reason for acting rather than not acting in this concern.” But he thinks they do so without a real conviction of their obligation to immediate repentance; and that all which can or ought to be done, is to urge that obligation upon their consciences.

To present this topic so that the precise point at issue may be seen, we will again state what we regard as the sinner’s objection, in its true form and force. The sinner then admitting his natural ability and obligation, to give God his heart, maintains in view of his dependence on divine grace, that it is useless for him to act, with reference to the discharge of his duty. This he maintains on the ground, that according to the true doctrine of dependence, the grace of God (without which the act will not be done) *is not*, or *will not* be furnished, when the act itself ought to be done. There is a *known certainty* therefore, he contends, that any acts on his part, will be as vain and useless, in respect to the performance of duty, as not to act at all.

Now we say that if this view of the doctrine of dependence, is authorized, the sinner’s objection to acting in the performance of duty under the call to duty, is valid. This it will be seen Dr. Tyler denies. We also maintain, that to meet this objection, it is necessary to show, that the sinner’s view of the mode of grace is unauthorized. It must be shown, not indeed that the requisite grace *certainly will* attend the call to duty, but that such *MAY* prove to be the fact,—that the sinner has no right to assume the contrary, or to abstain from acting, on the ground that the requisite grace will *not* be furnished. Now we are constrained to say, that, in our view, the statements of Dr. Tyler himself, do justify these very objections of the sinner. For he says, “When the sinner replies, I

see and feel that it is my reasonable duty to repent, but such is the wickedness of my heart, that I never shall repent, until I am renewed by divine grace, this is not an objection, but the *statement of a fact*, and all we have to do with it, is to admit the truth of it in its fullest extent. What else can we do?" p. 24. Now we think that *this statement* of a fact, taken in its full extent, and especially in connection with other statements of Dr. Tyler, fully authorizes the sinner's view of the doctrine of dependence. Thus, Dr. Tyler says, "that the sinner will never repent, until renewed by divine grace,"—i. e. by fair construction, will never perform "the first moral act of the new-born soul," until he is *first* renewed by grace;—or as Dr. Tyler says on p. 42, "unless by a direct divine influence upon the heart, *preparing* it to receive the truth and yield to the motives which truth presents." Here then it is asserted, that there must be a *preparation* of the heart by direct divine influence upon it, *before* the act of repentance, or the first moral act of the new-born soul, or the act of yielding to the motives which truth presents. In other words, the *renovation* of the heart, or a *preparation* of the heart, by divine influence, is distinguished from the first moral act of the new-born soul, and affirmed to *precede* it. Dr. Tyler also maintains, as we have seen, that all acts of thought, before this change or preparation of the heart by direct divine influence, are selfish and sinful,—are only abusing the truth, and can have no tendency but to *prevent* a change of heart. Suppose now that the sinner, with these statements of Dr. Tyler in view, should say, "There is no good and sufficient reason, why, when called to duty, I should act, or even think of acting in the performance of duty!" Would not this, we ask, be "*an objection?*" And we ask again,—how would Dr. Tyler answer the objection?

He replies, "To meet and answer the objection therefore, which is drawn from the doctrine of the sinner's dependence on God, *all that is necessary* is, to exhibit clearly the ground of this dependence, and to show that it does not cancel his obligations, nor in the least degree impair his ability to perform his duty." p. 24. Suppose then the sinner to reply, "I admit all this—my natural powers—my obligation—the wickedness and perverseness of my heart;—my conscience condemns me—I have no excuse. But still, why should I act in the performance of duty, or even think of acting at all, when I am assured, that I never shall act, except in a sinful, vain and useless manner; or rather in a manner which tends only to prevent right action; *until* my heart is *prepared* to yield to the motives to right action?" But says Dr. Tyler, "he is told—that effort, if made, so far from being useless, will infallibly be successful." p. 24. "That is, says the sinner, (for such is the import of Dr. Tyler's statement,) *if* I perform my duty, I shall infallibly perform it; which is no reason at all. The question then remains,

why should I act, or think of acting in the performance of duty, when my heart is not changed; and when I am assured if changed at all, it will be changed, either "in sleep," (p. 43,) or when my heart, and will, and all my thoughts, are directly resisting right action; and when, of course, I am acting in a manner fitted only to prevent the change?" "For the best reasons in the world," says Dr. Tyler. "Because God commands him to act—Because he is able to act—Because he will perish eternally if he does not act—And because if he does act as *required*, he will secure eternal life." p. 61. "True," says the sinner. "But then I know I never shall act as required; I shall only act selfishly and sinfully, and in a manner fitted only to prevent right action. There is no more reason to fear the loss of the soul by dismissing the subject from thought altogether, than by thinking of it. I may therefore as well wait without thought and without action, until my heart is *prepared* for right action, as to think and act in a manner which is not only useless, but fitted to defeat a change of heart." How would Dr. Tyler answer now? To us it seems, that he states "a fact," which authorizes the sinner's objection to the performance of duty, and then leaves it unanswered. For, as he says, "What else can we do?"

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"I would ask," says Dr. T., "on what *other* ground can we *urge* up on the sinner the present performance of duty, except that he possesses all the powers of moral agency, which qualify him instantly to per-

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constitutional sense or feeling of approbation, which every moral being whether sinful or holy must experience, in view of the divine character. There can be no moral excellence plainly, in any state of feeling toward the character of God, which does not involve the preference, that his character should be what it is, rather than any other character.

Dr. Tyler seems to suppose that acts may be *voluntary*, and yet not acts of *preference*. He says, "that every moral act is a voluntary act, is doubtless true." "But every moral act, is not necessarily an act of preference—that is a preference which implies a comparison of objects and a choice between them."

On this subject Dr. Tyler quotes a passage from Edwards, describing (as he supposes) voluntary states of mind, which are diverse from preference. Had he turned to Edwards' treatise on the Will, he could have put no such construction on that passage. "For the soul to act *voluntarily*," says that writer, "is *evermore* to act *ELECTIVELY*." Again he says, "in every volition there is *preference*." No comment can be necessary.

The last objection which we shall consider, "relates to the *agency* of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. The reviewer, if I understand him, says Dr. Tyler, maintains, that the Holy Spirit never operates directly on the mind." p. 39. We have never called in question the doctrine of an immediate or direct agency of the Spirit, on the soul, in regeneration. We have only maintained, that this agency neither creates any new constitutional properties in the mind, nor violates the laws of moral action. To that agency, we ascribe every stage in the progress of the soul, from the darkness and ruin of our fallen state, to the unmingled purity of the just made perfect.

But we still say, as we said before, that if there were nothing in the mind of the sinner to which the motives of the gospel can be addressed, except the selfish principle; the moral transformation of the soul would in our view be hopeless to omnipotence itself. For what is the impossibility in the case? It is this, that enmity itself should be made to love the very object which it hates; or that a being who has *no capacity of feeling* motives, should yet feel them, and act under their influence. And yet, admitting this very impossibility as the real impossibility in the case of sinners, Dr. Tyler sarcastically exclaims, "wo to the world! We be all dead men! Christ is dead in vain, and the Holy Spirit has been given to no purpose." p. 40. We ask however, whether this ironical inference of Dr. Tyler, is not, according to his *own* principles, sober verity? He maintains, that there is no susceptibility in the mind of the sinner, to which the motives to holiness can be addressed,—none which can in any way be reached or affected by these motives, except the selfish principle; and that to use truth or "light as the instrument to cure this disposition, is like using oil to

extinguish fire." p. 44. Can Omnipotence then produce holy love in such a being? How? Not by causing enmity itself to love; for this is a contradiction in the nature of things. Not by changing the *essential* properties of the soul itself; for then it would not be a human soul. Can "stones and trees," remaining stones and trees, be made the subjects of holy moral affections, even by omnipotence? Can the soul of the sinner then remaining what it is, in its essential properties, be on the principles of Dr. Tyler, the subject of a moral transformation, even by the power of God? Self-consistency on his part, requires therefore that as a matter of real conviction and belief, he should cry in still deeper notes, "wo to the world! We be all dead men!"

Further; Dr. Tyler maintains, what may be termed **PHYSICAL REGENERATION**. By this we mean, a *change* in the sinner, *prior to*, and *distinct from*, right voluntary action, i. e. right action done in view of motives. Speaking of truth as rendered efficacious by the special agency of the Holy Spirit, he says,—“But *how?* unless by a direct influence upon the heart, **PREPARING IT*** to receive the truth and *yield* to the motives, which truth presents.” p. 42. Now it will not be claimed that the mind acts right, *before* it yields to the motives, which truth presents. Is then this **ACT**, the same thing as this *preparation* of the heart thus to act? Plainly not. Here then, Dr. Tyler has unequivocally asserted the necessity of a change of heart, *prior to*, and *distinct from*, right action.

Again he says, “I do not feel authorized to say, that God *cannot* regenerate a person in sleep or in a delirium,—or that he cannot, independently of motives, produce a *state of mind*, which shall **MANIFEST itself** in right moral action, whenever motives shall be presented to it.” p. 43. Of course, *the state of mind* here spoken of, is not itself right moral action, but prior to it and manifesting itself in it. Besides, a moral act, says Dr. Tyler, is “an intelligent act.” But such an act cannot exist in sleep or in delirium. Therefore regeneration in sleep or delirium is a change *prior to* right moral action.

Dr. Tyler afterwards describes this change more fully. “We are so constituted, he says, that when an object is presented to the mind, we *like* or *dislike* it, are *pleased* or *displeased*; and these *feelings* when exercised towards moral objects, are of a moral nature.” p. 60. In the same connection, he distinguishes *liking*, or *disliking*, *being pleased* or *displeased*, from “an act of preference;” “i. e. a preference which implies a comparison of objects and a *choice* between them.” Now we ask what such a state of mind can be, except a mere constitutional feeling—a feeling towards its object, existing by the same laws of physical necessity, by which the sensation of hunger, or any similar feeling, exists in view of its

* When the scriptures speak of the preparation of the heart by God, it is not something prior to right moral action, but that action itself.

object. We ask again, if it results from the fact that '*we are so constituted,*' how is the feeling to be avoided? If, for example, man is *so constituted*, that he is pleased with God, as he is with an object of natural beauty, how *can* he in any sense, commit sin. If on the contrary, he is *so constituted*, that he *cannot* but be displeased with God, or cannot but be pleased with opposite objects, how *can* he in any sense, become holy, or avoid sin? Nothing can be plainer, than that if these things are so, the very constitutional properties of the being must be changed, or a holy being *cannot* in any sense, become sinful, nor a sinful being become holy.

Dr. Tyler's illustrations accord well with these views. "God makes use of the truth in renewing the heart as he makes use of light in causing vision. No man can see without the light of the sun. Neither can any man *exercise* holiness without the light of truth. But pour light forever on the eyes of a blind man, and it will not remove his blindness." p. 42. Now this illustration is not after the scriptural mode, "*which have eyes to see, and see not.*" In other words, voluntary *wilful* blindness is not the obstacle; but blindness, *because there are no eyes which CAN see.* There is not the requisite physical organ,—no constitutional capacity—no natural power. Eyes therefore, or what is equivalent, must be literally created, before the man *can* see, in any sense of the word. To apply this illustration, a new constitutional property of the mind must be *literally created* in the sinner, or he *CANNOT* in any sense, '*exercise holiness.*'

We say then that Dr. Tyler clearly teaches, that the depravity of man is a *physical* depravity, and that the change in regeneration is a *PHYSICAL* change.

Such, if we mistake not, is the fundamental error that pervades all Dr. Tyler's reasonings, on the subject in discussion. They are in perfect keeping, with the three-fold impossibility, that a sinner should so use truth as to obey it; as well as his constant assumption, that there is no susceptibility in man to truth, but the selfish principle; which, in the *very nature of things*, must hate truth the more clearly it is seen. Dr. Tyler never seems to have thought that the moral inability of a sinner to perform right moral action, lies in that certainty of continued sin, which coexists, and is perfectly consistent with, every power and property of moral agency.

Dr. Tyler, we know, will revolt from these exhibitions, which his language, fairly interpreted, makes of this part of the subject. We know, that he often asserts the sinner's natural ability, and clearly sees the importance of this truth, when contemplating man in his moral and accountable relations. But it is plain, that when he speaks of the sinner's dependence, the necessity of divine influence in regeneration, and the ground of this necessity, he lays that ground in some constitutional defect, or *natural inability*? This unfortunate inconsistency, even in superior minds, when contem-

plating a subject under different aspects, is no uncommon fact. It is this inconsistency, with the kindred error, of exhibiting the present performance of duty as hopeless through the assumed want of divine grace, which it was our object to expose, and if possible to correct.

Dr. Tyler asks, "what difficulty is avoided, by resorting to this distinction, between using the means of regeneration, and regeneration (conversion) itself." We answer, a difficulty which is one of the most common, and one of the most calamitous imaginable. We mean the difficulty, resulting from certain modes of exhibiting the doctrine of dependence. If the change in regeneration is voluntary action, then the sinner will never be the subject of it, without *voluntarily ACTING it*. But he never will act thus, while he believes, either that he cannot, or that *he shall not*; i. e. while he regards the action as *hopeless*. Believing this, under each successive call to duty, he will never obey it, and will die in his sins. But if our views be correct, then under the call to duty, the sinner is to believe first, that no new physical power or property is to be created in the soul, to qualify him to perform his duty; and secondly, that it may prove to be the fact, through grace, that he shall perform it, if he applies himself to the work. Some preachers, we believe, are fairly understood by their hearers, to deny these truths; and the effect on the minds of their hearers is, a settled conviction of the utter hopelessness of the immediate performance of duty. They place themselves therefore in the attitude of passive receivers of a divine gift. The monitions of conscience are often greatly checked; and perhaps all hope of eternal life is abandoned, under the idea that all present action is in vain, without some new and peculiar influence of the Holy Spirit. It may indeed be true, that after a longer or shorter process of *sinful* conviction, truth may so prevail over error in the mind, as to put the sinner at last upon direct action in obeying it; or to using the means of regeneration in the immediate performance of duty. But numerous and fearful are the instances, in which sinners remain in a state of anxiety, only abusing and perverting truth, or return to stupidity in sin; because they do not know that the way, and the only way, in which duty ever was, or ever will be done, is by *putting themselves directly to its performance*.

Such then are the errors and such the calamitous results, which we believe are avoided by the principles that we have advocated. It is very unexpectedly and with extreme regret, that we have been called upon, in self-defense, to show that they are involved in the principles laid down by Dr. Tyler. We are persuaded, that he has not been aware of the impressions, which such representations of the sinner's inability and dependence, are fitted to produce. We cherish the hope, that he will yet view the subject under some new aspects. We believe he must see, that to deny

the existence of a constitutional susceptibility to the motives presented in the gospel, is to assert the necessity of a physical change in regeneration; and thus to establish the doctrine of natural inability.

But however this may be, we shall never cease to cherish for Dr. Tyler those sentiments of respect and esteem, which are the fruits of a long and endeared intimacy, at the period when he was himself associated with us in the support of this work. If, in exhibiting our views, we have entered too far into that minute *analysis* of mental states and acts, which the writings of Stewart and Brown have made familiar to the public—if the imperfection of language, or the use of technical terms, has led to a misconception of our meaning—if any obscurity of statement has resulted from the continual interruptions to which we are subjected, in the discharge of varied and laborious duties, none can regret the fact more deeply than ourselves. But we rejoice to see, that exactly the same views are advanced by an able writer on the *Means of Repentance*, in the last number of the *Biblical Repository* conducted at Princeton; and as they are not stated in an abstract manner, we hope they will not be misunderstood.

Another friend, as we gather from Dr. Tyler's statement, has misconceived our meaning—the brother “whose praise is in all the churches.” His judgment was formed, like that of Dr. Tyler, not only before he had heard us through, but with mistaken views as to the import of our language. If there is a man on earth, who urges the motives of the gospel upon the awakened soul, on the assumption that *that soul has a constitutional capacity to feel those motives*, it is the brother in question. If there is a man, who enjoins “thoughtfulness,” “strenuous effort,” etc. he is the man. Who that was ever associated with him in those scenes of thrilling interest, which reduce to nothingness all other scenes of earth, can forget the indescribable earnestness of manner, with which he is accustomed to say, to the impenitent, “Now you will attend to this subject,” “You will not forget it,” “You will not give it up.” Nor did he ever think, that they would be thus brought forward to the *act* of giving God their hearts, either from holy motives or from sinful motives; but, under grace, from that impulse to escape impending ruin, and to secure their *true interests*, which the whole tenor of his preaching is so wonderfully adapted to excite.

To conclude; we still hope, that Dr. Tyler will one day acknowledge that his anxiety and forebodings on our account have been without foundation. His love of truth and his recollection of early friendships, will make him rejoice to do so, even though he should “incur the disgrace of being found a false prophet.”

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