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collective, or rather upon its cumulative force. Our labors, however, will still be critical as well as constructive; and we shall seek to avoid those extreme positions with regard to the present question, which, on the one side, would tend to bring linguistic science into disrepute by reason of hasty assumptions, and, on the other, would serve to retard its progress by the attempt to show that all comparison in this department is merely a waste of energy.

ARTICLE VII.

DR. HODGE'S MISREPRESENTATIONS OF PRESIDENT FINNEY'S SYSTEM OF THEOLOGY.

BY REV. GEORGE F. WRIGHT, ANDOVER, MASS.

THE death, on the 16th of August, 1875, at the advanced age of eighty-three, of the Rev. Charles G. Finney, removed one who had long been a conspicuous actor in some phases of what is called the New School controversy. Educated for the law, he became, soon after his conversion and till his old age, a remarkable instrument in the promotion of revivals throughout the Middle and Eastern States, and to some extent in England. He was regularly inducted into the Presbyterian ministry in 1824. The extreme Calvinism of the time and region in which he began his labors, compelled him as a practical preacher to dwell with great emphasis on the obverse side of the doctrines of divine sovereignty and election, and to give a prominence to human responsibility and the freedom of the will which has led to much misapprehension regarding his real position as a moderate Calvinist. President Finney differed from many so-called "revivalists" in this, that his preaching was pre-eminently doctrinal. His presentations of "the total, moral, voluntary depravity of unregenerate man, the necessity of a radical change of heart through the truth, by the agency of the Holy Ghost; the divinity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; his vicarious atonement, equal to the wants of all mankind; the gift, divinity, and agency of the Holy Ghost; repentance, faith, justification by faith, sanctification by faith," were sharp-cut and powerful.¹ "The doctrine of the justice of endless punishment, . . . and not only its justice, but the certainty that sinners will be endlessly punished if they die in their sins, was strongly held forth. On all these points the gospel was

¹ *Memoirs*, p. 134.

so presented as to give forth no uncertain sound. . . . The nature of the sinner's dependence upon divine influence was explained and enforced and made prominent. Sinners were taught that, without the divine teaching and influence, it is certain, from their depraved state, that they never would be reconciled to God."¹

His sermons were far more than the vapid exhortation with which some who promote revivals have made us too familiar. Moreover, he was in the habit of preaching long sermons. His pastor and early instructor charged him "to be sure not to speak more than half an hour at a time." But in his first ministry his "sermons generally averaged nearly or quite two hours."² In later years they were of more moderate length; though it is difficult to see how the fifty-one heads, given in the specimen taken at random from his skeletons, could be compressed into a sermon of less than an hour.³

In 1835, on his removal to Oberlin, Ohio, to fill the chair of theology in a newly-formed institution, he began a series of publications which should define his theological views.⁴ In 1852 he was elected president of

¹ Memoirs, p. 364.

² Ibid. p. 80.

³ See p. 97.

⁴ We append a list of his works: (1) Lectures on Revivals of Religion. pp. 438. 12mo. New York: Leavitt, Lord, and Co. 1835. There was an immediate sale of six editions of 2000 copies each of this work. A thirteenth edition was published in 1840. It was republished by two rival houses in England, one of which issued 80,000 copies. A revised edition was published in 1868, by E. J. Goodrich, Oberlin, Ohio. This work was translated into the Welsh and French languages. (2) Lectures to Professing Christians, first American edition probably in 1835. A third London edition, 12mo, appeared in 1839. (3) Sermons on Important Subjects. 8vo. pp. 277. New York: J. S. Taylor (3d ed.). 1836. (4) Skeletons of a Course of Theological Lectures. 8vo. pp. 248. Oberlin: James Steele. 1840. (5) Lectures on Systematic Theology, embracing Lectures on Moral Government, together with Atonement, Moral and Physical Depravity, Regeneration, Philosophical Theories, and Evidences of Regeneration. Vol. i. 8vo. pp. 587. Oberlin, Boston, and New York, 1846. The second volume was issued in 1847, and discussed the doctrines of Ability, Repentance, Faith, Justification, Sanctification, Election, Reprobation, Divine Sovereignty, Purposes of God, and Perseverance of the Saints. A new edition, "Revised, enlarged, and partly re-written by the author," with an Introduction by Rev. Geo. Redford, D.D., LL.D., of Worcester, England, together with an Appendix containing "An Examination by Prof. C. G. Finney, of the Review [by Dr. Hodge] of Finney's Systematic Theology, published in the Biblical Repository, Princeton, N. J., June, 1847;" also, "A Reply to the 'Warning Against Error,' written by the Rev. Dr. Duffield," was issued in one vol. 8vo., pp. 996. Tegg and Co., London. 1851. (6) The Character, Claims, and practical working of Free Masonry. 16mo. pp. 272. Cincinnati, 1869. (7) Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney, written by himself. pp. 477. New York: A. S. Barnes and Co. 1876. President Finney was a frequent contributor to the Oberlin Evangelist, 1839-1861, and the Oberlin Quarterly Review, 1845-1849, and in later years to the "Advance" and "Independent" newspapers.

the college. Of Mr. Finney's labor as a teacher of theology, President Fairchild, the editor of his *Memoirs*, remarks: "His work as a theologian, a leader of thought, in the development and expression of a true Christian philosophy, and as an instructor, in quickening and forming the thought of others, has been less conspicuous [than his work as a preacher of righteousness], and in his own view, doubtless, entirely subordinate; but in the view of many, scarcely less fruitful of good to the church and the world."¹ It is not our present purpose to set forth in detail, nor to defend, either the methods by which Mr. Finney promoted revivals, or the doctrinal statements which he elaborated. But the severity with which Dr. Hodge has recently commented on that system makes it appropriate to shield it from his misrepresentations.

Dr. Hodge² begins his notice of President Finney's system by saying that it is "valuable as a warning"; he concludes his criticism of President Finney's statement of regeneration with the remark that "such a system is a *ὑπόδειγμα τῆς ἀπειθείας* [example of unbelief or disobedience]."³ Dr. Hodge's representations of President Finney are misleading in the following respects:

I. *Early Editions of Finney's Publications only are quoted.* — On the subject of Regeneration Dr. Hodge's quotations are from the edition of Finney's *Systematic Theology* published in 1846. On Sanctification the quotations are from the *Oberlin Evangelist* and the *Oberlin Quarterly Review* of about the same date. No reference whatever is made to the London edition of the *Systematic Theology* of 1851, which, in addition to having been "revised, enlarged, and partly re-written," contained also elaborate answers to the criticisms which Dr. Hodge, among others, had made upon the earlier edition.⁴

In publishing the body of divinity so long taught at Princeton, it was not necessary to give it the form of a compend and criticism of all theological literature, and to surround its ample pages with a bristling abattis of foot-notes; and even on the plan adopted it might not have been essential to give more than a passing notice of President Finney. But since the author chooses to make his erudition prominent, and to add force to his views by numerous references to a wide range of literature, the critic must judge him according to the ambitiousness of the aim. Erudition is worse than useless if it essentially fails in accuracy. A fig-tree without leaves raises no false hopes. It is bad enough if the abundant foliage invites you to a fruitless search. It is superlatively bad if the fruit that is found be positively poisonous. Inasmuch as President Finney's writings are honored by Dr. Hodge with twenty-eight references, it is a misfortune that

¹ *Memoirs*, p. 477.

² See *Systematic Theology*, by Charles Hodge, D.D., Vol. iii. pp. 8-11, 255-257. New York, 1873.

³ See Hebrews, iv. 11.

⁴ See Finney, *Systematic Theology* (London, 1851), Appendix, pp. 916-961.

the author was not sufficiently familiar with his subject to be able to direct his readers to the revised edition of his opponent's work. And it is still more to be lamented that even

II. *The Old Edition is grossly misrepresented.* — § 1. President Finney is represented as substituting the universe for God as the object of our allegiance. Dr. Hodge's statement reads: "Professor Finney adopts the common eudaemonistic theory which makes the happiness of being, i.e. of the universe, the chief good."¹ "The Oberlin theory . . . is founded on the following principles: first, holiness consists in disinterested benevolence, i.e. perfect willingness that God should do whatever the highest good of the universe demands."² "The Pelagian system does not [like the Oberlin] assume that disinterested benevolence, or the purpose to promote the highest good of the universe, is the sum of all virtue; i.e. it does not put the universe in the place of God, as that to which our allegiance is due."³ The nature of these misrepresentations depends on the definition of the word "universe." If Dr. Hodge means by "universe" the creation as distinct from the Creator, his charge attributes to President Finney what he explicitly, emphatically, repeatedly, and in many ways disavows. If it is designed to include the Creator himself in the universe, it might not be a serious charge; but in that case Dr. Hodge has shown a lamentable lack of familiarity with the dictionary, and unaccountable forgetfulness of even his own ordinary usage of the word. Lexicographers uniformly confine the word universe to created existency. Webster defines it, "All created things viewed as constituting one system or whole"; Worcester, "The sum of created existence"; Milton is quoted,

"How may I

Adore thee, Author of this universe?"

Prior is quoted,

"Father of heaven

Whose nod called out this universe to birth!"

So President Edwards, in his dissertation concerning God's chief end in creation, has the following expressions: "Good in view . . . that inclined him [God] to bring the universe into existence in such a manner as he created it."⁴ "Designed in the creating of the astonishing fabric of the universe we behold . . ."⁵ "Such an arbiter as I have supposed would determine that the whole universe, in all its actings, proceedings, revolutions, and entire series of events, should proceed with a view to God as the supreme and last end, that every wheel in all its rotations should move with a constant, invariable regard to him as the ultimate end of all."⁶ His essay on the Nature of Virtue has this sentence: "But God has infinitely the

¹ Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. iii. p. 11. ² *Ibid.* p. 256. ³ *Ibid.* p. 257.

⁴ Works, 10 vols. (New York, 1830), Vol. iii. p. 10.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 12.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 16; see also p. 24.

greatest share of existence; so that all other being, even the whole universe, is as nothing in comparison of the Divine Being."¹

We have noted in the first volume of Dr. Hodge's Systematic Theology, in which the subjects are such that the word universe occurs most frequently, one hundred instances of his own use of it. Of this number eighty-two unequivocally contrast the universe with God. Of the remaining eighteen instances the larger part occur in the discussion of "Hylozoism" and "Pantheism," in which the nature of the subject renders it difficult to give the word universe any well defined meaning. But these are heresies that neither Dr. Hodge nor any one else has ever thought of charging upon President Finney, whose theism is unquestioned and most sharply defined. The very few remaining cases in which the word is employed by Dr. Hodge are indeterminate. Of his ordinary uses of the word the following are instances:

"We are shut up to the conclusion that the universe sprang out of nothing."² "The cause of the universe must be a personal God."³ "We then are placed in the midst of a vast universe of which we constitute a part. . . . How did this universe originate? How is it sustained? To what does it tend?"⁴ "God is not limited to the universe, which of necessity is finite."⁵ "He [God] was free to create or not to create, to continue the universe in existence, or to cause it to cease to be."⁶ "To make the good of the creature the highest end . . . is to put the means for the end, to subordinate God to the universe, the Infinite to the finite. This putting the creature in the place of the Creator disturbs our moral and religious sentiments and convictions, as well as our intellectual apprehensions of God, and of his relation to the universe. . . . A universe constructed for the purpose of making God known is a far better universe than one designed for the production of happiness."⁷ "God adopted the plan of the universe."⁸ "The scriptural doctrine therefore is, (1) That the universe is not eternal; it began to be. (2) It was not formed out of any pre-existence or substance, but was created *ex nihilo*. (3) That creation was not necessary. It was free to God to create or not to create, to create the universe as it is, or any other order and system of things, according to the good pleasure of his will."⁹ "We view the Creator as the cause of the universe."¹⁰ "Pantheism merges the universe in God."¹¹ "As the world, meaning thereby the universe of created beings, includes the world of matter and the world of mind, the doctrine of providence concerns, first, the relation of God to the external or material universe; and, secondly, his relation to the world of mind, or to his rational creatures."¹²

¹ Works, 10 vols. (New York, 1830), Vol. iii. p. 108.

² Hodge's Systematic Theology, Vol. i. p. 211.

³ p. 233.

⁴ p. 239.

⁵ p. 398.

⁶ p. 403.

⁷ p. 436.

⁸ p. 540.

⁹ p. 553.

¹⁰ p. 555, quoted from Sir William Hamilton.

¹¹ p. 580.

¹² p. 605.

It seems clear that Dr. Hodge knows the meaning of "universe." His general use of the word is correct. There can be no doubt what he means when he charges President Finney with putting "the universe in the place of God as that to which our allegiance is due." He represents him as putting the *creature* in place of the Creator. To this charge, when made in the Princeton Repertory by Dr. Hodge, President Finney, in the appendix to the revised edition of his *Theology*, replied thus: "This writer repeatedly insinuates that I confound God with the universe, and make good-will to the universe, instead of love to God, the great thing in religion. This representation is as false as possible, as every one who reads the book reviewed will see. I hold, indeed, that love to God considered as a virtue consists in good-will; that love to God as an emotion always exists where good-will exists; but that virtuous love is a voluntary exercise; that God's well-being and interests are of infinitely greater value than those of all the universe besides; and, of course, that love to him should always be supreme."¹

To give Dr. Hodge as much advantage as possible, we will now quote from the identical edition of President Finney's *Theology* upon which the charge under consideration is based.² On page forty-three, in opening the discussion of what President Finney says "is the key to the whole subject,"³ these words were placed in italics: "*The highest well-being of God and of the universe of sentient existences is the end on which ultimate preference, choice, intention, ought to terminate. In other words, the well-being of God and of the universe is the absolute and ultimate good, and therefore it should be chosen by every moral agent.*" President Finney excused the amount of repetition in his book on the plea that his experience as a teacher had ripened the conviction that there was no other way of being understood upon the subject. Notwithstanding the repetition, he feared it was "*condensed too much to be understood by some.*"⁴ His distinguished critic must be included in that "some;" for, a sixfold reiteration, upon this strategic page, of the postulate that choice ought to terminate on the well-being of *God and the universe,*" failed to catch the eye of Dr. Hodge; and President Finney is represented still as putting "the universe in the place of God as that to which our allegiance is due."

But perhaps that section is the only place in the book in which God is associated with the universe as the object of our love? On the contrary, the two words are coupled together throughout the lectures whenever there is any danger of misapprehension. On page fifty-three President Finney dwells upon the thought that the *ultimate good of God* is the *satisfaction, the perfect and infinite rest,* of the divine mind. Then follows this sen-

¹ *Systematic Theology* (London), p. 961.

² *Lectures on Systematic Theology*, by Charles G. Finney (ed. Oberlin, Boston, and New York, 1846).

³ *Lectures on Systematic Theology* (1846), Preface, p. v. ⁴ *Ibid.* p. iv.

tence, "The highest well-being of God and of the universe, then, or the highest good of universal being, must consist in a *state of entire satisfaction*." On page fifty-six, "*God and our neighbor*," "*God and the universe of creatures*," are called identical expressions, and are used interchangeably with "God and the universe." In the following one hundred and sixty-four pages¹ one or other of these, or of plainly synonymous, couplets, in the connection heretofore remarked upon, with *God* expressed, occurs upwards of two hundred times. At this point we ceased the labor of counting. Furthermore, emphasis is repeatedly laid on the principle that "benevolence being impartial love, of course accounts God's interests and well-being as of infinitely greater value than the aggregate of all other interests."²

It should be observed, also, that President Finney maintains as distinctly and emphatically as language will admit, that the will of God is an infallible and imperative rule of action. "The saint has made the will of God his law, and asks for no other reason to influence his decisions and actions than that such is the will of God. He has received the will of God as the unfailing index, pointing always to the path of duty. His intelligence affirms that God's will is, and ought to be, law, or perfect evidence of what law is."³ Again, "God's will is always authoritative, and imposes obligation, not in the sense of its being a foundation of obligation, but in the sense that it is an infallible declaration of the law of nature, or of the end at which, in the nature of things, moral agents ought to aim, and of the conditions or means of this end."⁴ "Observe, I expressly maintain that the command of God always imposes obligation without the knowledge of any other reason; but it does this upon the ground of an affirmation of reason that he has a good reason for the command, whether we can understand it or not."⁵

The character of Dr. Hodge's misrepresentation can be seen at a glance, by making the substitution complete in a sentence already quoted.⁶ It would then read thus: "The Pelagian system does not [like the Oberlin] . . . put 'God and the universe,' 'God and thy neighbor,' 'God and man,' in place of God, as that to which our allegiance is due." And here again is a misrepresentation in Dr. Hodge's substitution of the word allegiance for the love of good-will, which President Finney is always careful to use in this connection. We have seen that President Finney expressly maintains that supreme and unquestioning allegiance is always due to God. Does Dr. Hodge, or do the Pelagians, rule out the universe of sentient creatures from among the objects of our love or good will? Is it error to say that all duties are comprehended under these two: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself? Is it an error to use, as synonymous with this couplet, "Supreme love to God and

¹ Lectures on Systematic Theology (1846), pp. 56-220.

² Ibid. p. 218. See also pp. 98, 104, 162, 204.

⁴ Ed. (1851), p. 987.

⁵ Ibid. p. 948.

³ Ibid. p. 547.

⁶ Above, p. 384

equal love to man"? Or is it occasion of alarm that a theologian, who is at such pains as President Finney is to explain himself, sometimes, to save words, and to give incisiveness to the thought, substitutes for these complets the single term, "being in general," or "universal being"? But even this President Finney has rarely done.

§ 2. President Finney is represented as holding that regeneration is "a simple change of purpose."¹ The misrepresentation here is in the diminutive use of the word "simple." The idea is insinuated that "change of purpose," according to President Finney, is an isolated fact connected with no vast system of prevenient grace, and involving no profound change of the moral affections, as though we should call it a slight matter to charge a traitor with simply firing on the flag of his country. To guard against the impression that regeneration was viewed as a comparatively unimportant change, President Finney had in the volume which Dr. Hodge reviews, devoted ninety-seven pages to the subject. In the volume to which Dr. Hodge does not refer, but to which he ought to refer if he says anything at all about President Finney, the doctrines of election, divine sovereignty, and the purposes of God had been treated at length from a Calvinistic point of view. Moreover, in the very pages from which Dr. Hodge quotes, the point had been guarded from misapprehension by a prolonged discussion of the comprehensive significance of the word love, or benevolence. "Benevolence is good-willing, or the choice of the highest good of God and the universe as an end. . . . To say that love is the fulfilling of the whole law, that benevolence is the whole of true religion, that the whole duty of man to God and his neighbor is expressed in one word, *love*; these statements, though true, are so comprehensive as to need with all minds much amplification and explanation."²

Thereupon President Finney, in emphatic and incisive language, explicates his conception of the state of mind into which a person is brought in regeneration, devoting seventy-six pages to that one object.

President Finney does, indeed, both on philosophical and scriptural grounds, and in common with a great number of theologians, use regeneration and conversion as interchangeable terms, relating to a phenomenon in which divine and human agency coalesce, — the regeneration being nothing effectual without the conversion, and the conversion never occurring without the prevenient influence of the Holy Spirit. No man emphasizes the dependence upon the Holy Spirit in the work of conversion more than President Finney; albeit he may not philosophize on the nature of the work so much, or after the same manner, as Dr. Hodge would like. And no writer insists more strenuously than President Finney that what he calls the "change of purpose in regeneration," carries with it corresponding radical changes in all the affections of the soul. Indeed, he is

¹ Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. iii. p. 8.

² Finney, *Systematic Theology* (1845), p. 211.

charged by many critics, with expecting too great changes to follow conversion and the indwelling of the Spirit. It is sufficient to refer the reader to the thirty-one points, enunciated and expressed in President Finney's chapters on regeneration, showing in what the regenerate differ from the unregenerate, and by what they may test the genuineness of their supposed conversion. We forbear to give further quotations. It is in place, however, to repeat that the ninety-seven pages which President Finney has given to the subject of regeneration, the two hundred to sanctification, and the ninety-seven devoted to "election" and "perseverance of the saints," are pervaded with the idea of our dependence for all our hopes upon the work of the Holy Spirit. Of this disposition on the part of President Finney to honor the work of the Holy Spirit Dr. Hodge is not unaware, since, he says,¹ that "while the Oberlin divines maintain the plenary ability of man, they give more importance to the work of the Holy Spirit [than the Pelagians do] It is generally admitted [by them] that although men have the ability to do their whole duty, yet that they will not exert it aright unless influenced by the grace of God."

§ 3. To mention but one point further, Dr. Hodge represents President Finney as holding that "to feed the poor from a feeling of benevolence, and to murder a parent from a feeling of malice, involve the same degree of guilt!"² and adds, "such a sacrifice to logic was never made by any man before. But still more wonderful if possible, is the declaration that a man may 'feel deeply malicious and revengeful feelings toward God. But sin does not consist in these feelings, nor necessarily imply them.'"

In regard to these statements we remark in order, (1) That President Finney's, as fully as any other, system affords opportunity to classify sins according to degree.³ He holds, what is common to all systems of theology, that the transient emotions of men are not decisive indications and complete exponents of character. He has no such indicative sentence as that, "to feed the poor from a feeling of benevolence, and to murder a parent from a feeling of malice, involve the same degree of guilt;" and Dr. Hodge does not give it as a quotation, but as a fair representation of numerous quotations which precede. Dr. Hodge has in this instance wrought confusion, by substituting an *indicative* for a *subjunctive* mood. President Finney, in the illustrations which he uses upon this subject, is proceeding in his argument upon an expressed hypothesis with regard to the degree of light which these persons compared may be resisting. He would affirm that we cannot certainly say that the character of two persons, as viewed by God, may not be equally bad, while their acts have a very different external appearance, e.g. a man who is plotting treason against the State may pacify his mind by many acts of benevolence, so-called. Acts may be done under the pressure of a feeling of humanity, and still the man be

¹ Hodge, Vol. iii. p. 256.

² Vol. iii. p. 11.

³ See Systematic Theology (1846), pp. 345-363.

as wicked as an uninstructed heathen who kills his parent. Thomassen, the dynamite fiend, was "generous" enough to give his clock-maker sixteen dollars more than he had agreed to give, and in society was distinguished by apparently amiable qualities. But all these count for nothing in palliation of his comprehensive plans of iniquity. Superficial emotions are not to be judged by themselves, but by their relation to a primary and predominant, or what President Finney calls ultimate, choice. The feelings are but a partial clue to that choice. The polite manners of our civilization disguise, but do not remove, the enmity of the heart to God. In the sentence under consideration, which is made to represent the views of President Finney upon this point, Dr. Hodge makes further confusion of thought, by using the phrases "feeling of benevolence," and "feeling of malice," in connections which President Finney is careful to avoid, or which he uses at all only under emphatic protest and with extended explanation.¹ Benevolence is, according to President Finney, the choice of the good of being, and so, is virtue *per se*. Sin is some form of selfishness. Malevolence is, according to him "strictly speaking, impossible."² A pirate even is not such, "from malice or a disposition to do evil for its own sake, but only to gratify himself."³ When his sentences are put together with some attention to their connection, and to their moods and tenses, it will appear that President Finney in this matter only states consistently and clearly what is the universally accepted doctrine as to the fact of the existence of degrees of guilt. In his system the degree of guilt is measured by the amount of present light resisted. His may not be the most felicitous way of expressing the idea; but the method is by no means absurd.

(2) What is there objectionable, when you scan it, about the last clause of the quotation above commented on? All that is asserted is, that a man may be a sinner, and still not be cognizant of malicious and revengeful feelings toward God. And who can deny that statement? In a world where there are so many things to divert our attention from the main issue of our life, self-deception is a most common occurrence. President Finney distinctly and emphatically asserts that the feelings are indirectly under the control of the will, and so in time will reveal what has been the state of the will. He maintains in unequivocal language, that, in a sane mind, malicious and revengeful feelings toward God, are infallible indications of sin. His statement is that there may be sin, and very great sin, without these feelings. The section from which Dr. Hodge quotes reads thus: "Disobedience to moral law does not necessarily imply feelings of enmity to God or to man. The will may be set upon self-indulgence; and yet as the sinner does not apprehend God's indignation against him, and his opposition to him on that account, he may have no hard feelings or feelings of hatred to God. Should God reveal to him his

¹ Systematic Theology (ed. 1846); see pp. 284-294.

² Ibid. p. 354.

³ Ibid. p. 355.

abhorrence of him on account of his sins, his determination to punish him for them, the holy sovereignty with which he will dispose of him; in this case the sinner might, and probably would, feel deeply malicious and revengeful feelings towards God. But sin does not consist in these feelings nor necessarily imply them."¹

Dr. Hodge styles "the system of Professor Finney," a remarkable product of relentless logic,"² and so it is. President Finney, though remarkable as an extemporaneous preacher, was capable of writing upon theology like a logician and a philosopher, and to this capacity of mind his long-continued success as a preacher is in no small degree due. But one who is familiar with President Finney's writings and with the pages in Dr. Hodge's large work, which review them, cannot resist the feeling that Dr. Hodge, even when he writes a *Systematic Theology*, falls into all the looseness of statement that is incident to the poorer styles of extempore preaching. President Finney, following in the wake of leading New England theologians, notably Edwards and Hopkins, unified the two commands on which Christ said all the law and the prophets hung, viz. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,"³ under the comprehensive term love; which is declared in Scripture to be the fulfilling of the law. The objects to be loved were sentient beings, of whom God is infinitely the greatest, and hence is worthy of supreme regard. President Finney likewise makes those distinctions between choice and feeling, which are essential to avoid confusion of thought in what is not a rhetorical, but a systematic and logical, statement of theological truth. He distinguished logically between the action of will that chooses an object, and the feeling of complacency or of displacency that supervenes necessarily upon the choice of a worthy or of an unworthy object.

At this point, we can hardly resist the temptation to speculate concerning the cause of such misrepresentations as we have here feebly attempted to review. The theory that they were consciously intended as caricatures we have studiously rejected. Regarding the particular case in hand, our conclusion, confirmed also by analogous experience in critically examining several other portions of these ponderous volumes of Dr. Hodge, is this, that their author is by nature an advocate, and that he is singularly lacking in the judicial qualities of mind, which are necessary for understanding the position of an opponent. Indeed, according to our experience, he can hardly state the argument of an antagonist without misstating it. The decade beginning with 1837, the year of the disruption of the Presbyterian church, was a period of heated controversy. There is no evidence that Dr. Hodge read anything from President Finney's pen later

¹ Finney, *Systematic Theology* (1846), p. 296.

² Hodge, Vol. iii. p. 8.

³ Luke x. 27.

than April, 1847, the date of his review of the first edition of Finney's Lectures on Theology. In preparing for such a review at such a time he could not well avoid reading "between the lines." Many sentences and parts of sentences caught his eye which have a very ugly look when standing alone, or when strung on the thread of the reviewer's prepossessions. Thus originated, as a controversial Article in the Princeton Repertory, Dr. Hodge's first filtrate of President Finney's system. The excitement of the times would excuse much misapprehension. It was natural in such a production that the language of the feelings should predominate. What we cannot so easily excuse is, that when, twenty years later, he was preparing a Systematic Theology, the author should content himself with simply distilling the filtrate, and should embody as part of a permanent work the quintessence of an advocate's plea, that had served its purpose twenty years before. We have found indications of a similar process in so many other portions of Dr. Hodge's three volumes, that we wonder if every opposing view is treated in like manner. If the instances of this manner of treatment are half as numerous as our own experience leads us to fear, we are further led to inquire whether it was worth while for Dr. Hodge to attempt to state, for the sake of confuting, the views of so many authors. Why did he not confine himself to the discussion of principles in the abstract? Would not the cause of truth have been better promoted had he written less, and taken more pains to understand what he opposed, or had he delegated the work of making summaries to a more judicial mind? It might seem that the evil results of the wholesale misrepresentations of our author would be partially neutralized by his careful references to the chapter and page from which he quotes. These do indeed make it easy for those who have access to libraries to refute Dr. Hodge, and are a sure pledge of his honesty of purpose. But we must not forget that these volumes of Dr. Hodge will be most prized by the more self-denying class of ministers and missionaries, home and foreign, who must depend for their information upon the single compend of theology which they can afford to buy. To all such, the abundant foot-notes are a snare and a delusion, unless the quotations have been made with scrupulous candor and accuracy.

In conclusion, we cannot wholly overcome the feeling that it is unfortunate for Dr. Hodge that he defends a system of theology which defines sin as "a condition or state of the mind," as well as an "activity";¹ that he says "the law . . . condemns evil dispositions or habits as well as voluntary sins." We can absolve him from intentional misrepresentation; but just how the author, who holds "that there is more in them [mankind] of the nature of sin than mere acts and exercises," would dispose of himself, we are not called upon to say.

¹ Hodge, Systematic Theology, Vol. ii. p. 187.