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ARTICLE II.

STODDARD'S THEOLOGICAL LECTURES.

BY REV. CHARLES M. MEAD, THEOLOGICAL LICENTIATE, HALLE, GERMANY.

Most of our readers may remember that Mr. Stoddard after his return to Persia in 1851, prepared a course of theological lectures for use with his classes in the seminary at Seir. No one who has learned to admire the man can have failed to feel a curiosity to know somewhat more respecting these lectures. But as they were written in English only for his own convenience, then translated into Syriac, and published only in that form (after Mr. Stoddard's death, under the supervision of Dr. Perkins), of course that curiosity has not been gratified. It gives us pleasure to state that we have been permitted to see the English manuscript, and to give some account of it to the public. It is only a sketch, not a critical analysis, that we attempt. He who is most willing to have his defects pointed out is the one in whom we most dislike to find them. No theologian, probably, would have more heartily invited a severe judgment on his work than Mr. Stoddard; but on no one would we be less inclined to bestow it. There was that in his unaffected modesty, in his thorough honesty, in the unselfish and elevated character of his aims, which disarms criticism. He may have had faults as a man, as a Christian, as a missionary, as a teacher; but, as not in the case of some men, we can learn less from his faults than from his excellences. In regard to him then, at least, we are disposed to do all we can to falsify Mark Antony's dolorous complaint: "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."

Theological lectures on missionary ground are so rare that many may be prepared to expect in them something very different from the theology of Christian lands. We must disappoint such expectatio[illegible] have

their peculiarities, growing out of the fact that they were designed for, and specially adapted to, Nestorian youth; but in the staple of the thought, in the order and mode of discussion, and in the general impression left by them on the mind, there is nothing strikingly novel. Had they been written for Chinamen or Esquimaux they would doubtless have borne different features. The Nestorians believe in the authority of the Bible. They discard alike the absurd theologies of the heathen and the idolatrous practices of Roman Catholics. They are called by Dr. Perkins the Protestants of Asia. In theory, even before conversion, they are not very far from orthodoxy, according to our own standard. What they chiefly need is to be vitalized. Mr. Stoddard was eminently fitted for this work. Naturally ardent, supernaturally quickened, he was well able, both by precept and by example, to exhibit the value of Christian truth working in the heart, as distinct from a blind adherence to Christian doctrines and a dull observance of Christian forms. Much as we see evidence of this in the work before us, it cannot be supposed that the fervor of his oral instructions has been transferred to the written page; nor can we hope, in the following sketch, to do justice in this respect even to what is written, especially as in him, more than in many men, what he says depends for its force very much upon how he says it.

The order of the topics discussed is not very different from that adopted by Dr. Dwight, whose system is one of those to which Mr. Stoddard often refers. Natural theology is first taken up, and the *a posteriori* argument for the being of God is stated in almost precisely the same form as by Dr. Paley. He has nothing to do with *a priori* arguments, nor does he introduce the more subtle of the skeptical objections to the other. The divine attributes are treated in a similar manner. The subject of God's benevolence is argued at considerable length. Bringing up the objection derived from the existence of sin, he says in a note: "Here present the old dilemma: 'He can and will, or he cannot

and will not, or he will and cannot, or he can and will not, keep out sin from the creation.' But (1) if he can do a thing and will do it, he *does* it. But he has not done it. Therefore this assertion is a lie. (2) He cannot and will not. Then he is neither omnipotent nor benevolent. (3) He will and cannot. Then he is benevolent, but not omnipotent. (4) He can and will not. Then he is omnipotent, but not benevolent. This is, after all, probably the true alternative. He *could* keep it out, but by destroying the moral system, by taking away our free agency, by making us brutes. I am not ready to say he could in any *other* sense, though many eminent theologians of the Tyler school think so." Having given, as one reply to the objection that perhaps God will in the end bring good out of evil, he says in another note: "Then,' say some, 'sin is a necessary means of the greatest good.' I like Dr. Taylor's statement better: 'sin is necessarily *incidental* to the best moral system.'" The moral argument, which to a cultivated mind is likely to seem the most conclusive, he gives in the following form: "He knows that we cannot love our Creator, if he is wicked. He has given us a conscience. That teaches us to hate what is evil. If, then, God is wicked, he has made us so that it is impossible for us to love and obey him. We cannot, then, believe that he is wicked." But although it is stated thus clearly and forcibly, he remarks: "This *a priori* reasoning of Dwight has little force to the common mind."

The discussion of the doctrines of immortality and of future retribution presents nothing of special interest. The genuineness and authenticity of the scriptures are proved in the ordinary way and with great fulness. Having established the inspiration of the Bible, he begins anew with the doctrines, and gives us his system of revealed theology. On the divine attributes he has little but proof-texts. On the decrees of God he has nothing specially noteworthy, which cannot be better considered in another connection. Passing this by, therefore, together with the next subject in order, that of holy and evil angels, we will arrange what we have

further to say under a few general heads, according to our own convenience.

The subject of the Trinity is not introduced at all until after that of human depravity. Having shown that there is no justification by the law, the author asks: "Who, then, justifies us? *Ans.* Christ. This leads us to a great subject: Who is Christ?" Christ's humanity is first proved, then his divinity, and the conclusion is thus stated: "We are, then, to understand that Christ had two *natures;* that he was real man and real God. But he had only one *person.* These two natures were united in one person. So the Bible teaches; but we cannot understand just how." Similarly, the Holy Ghost is not spoken of until the subject of regeneration is taken up, and the question arises: "Who is the regenerator?" Having answered this, he brings up the general subject of the Trinity, but disposes of it in a few lines: "the Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Ghost is God. These three are one divine being, equal in power and glory. *How* they are united, we cannot understand, and perhaps never shall. There are three persons, but not three Gods; three *persons* and one God, three *persons* and one *being:* three trees and one root."

We pass to consider what is said on the character of man. From his creation "in the image of God," Mr. Stoddard infers in Adam a resemblance to God, (1) "in mind, reason, etc.;" (2) in his "power and dominion over the world"; (3) "in his conscience"; (4) "in moral disposition"; (5) "in his blessedness"; (6) "in his immortality." Under the fourth specification he remarks in a note: "It would be unprofitable in my classes to discuss the question whether holiness is *created*, any more than under 'total depravity' to discuss the question whether sin is. My opinion is that *neither* is created in any proper sense, but that man was originally endowed with such powers as *uniformly led to right action*, and has now such a nature as *uniformly leads to wrong action.* But I would neither predicate *holiness* in the proper sense, nor *sin*, of the nature, previous to moral

acts. Dr. Woods says of man's fallen nature that before moral action it is sinful '*relatively to its effects.*' So we may say that Adam's nature, when he was first created, was holy '*relatively to its effects.*' It is difficult to feel that holiness and sin do not both involve the *will*, the voluntary choice of the mind and heart." On the question why God suffered Adam to fall, he says: "This is a difficult question, but we can say some things about it." Three considerations are presented: (1) that it was better that Adam should be a free agent than a machine; (2) that, except for the fall, men might have remained forever on the earth; (3) that "in no other way could God so well have shown his mercy and his justice blended together." In a note he adds: "Is not sin then a *good thing*, if so much good comes out of it, and more good than would out of holiness? And the more sin there is, is there not greater resulting good? Shall we not sin that grace may abound? All that I can say in reply is that which Paul said: 'God forbid.' Dr. Taylor thinks he has found a solution. He thinks that God perhaps *could not* prevent sin consistently with free agency, and he chose therefore not the highest *conceivable* system, ... but the best *practicable* system. One is tempted to adopt this view as relieving the difficulty in a measure. 'But,' says Dr. Tyler, 'you thus limit the *power* of God and tarnish his ineffable lustre.' 'But,' replies the other, 'you, by your system, limit the *goodness* of God, and throw a reproach on him still greater. If he *could* prevent sin, why did not he?' For my part, I do not expect a full solution till I get to heaven, and may be thankful if the subject is not above my comprehension even there." In reference to the sentence pronounced on Adam, he says: "We understand by the words 'thou shalt die,' not only the death of the *body*, but, first, *spiritual* death ..... secondly, *eternal* death." In a note under this, we read: "Dr. Taylor argues, and perhaps justly, that spiritual death is not a *part* of the penalty, though it is a *consequence* of *sin*. Sin is the act of a free moral agent, and not a thing suffered." On our connection

with the sin of Adam, we find the following: "(1) We ourselves did not eat the fruit. We were not there. We were not born. (2) We are not guilty because Adam ate it; ..... (3) But yet we must admit that Adam was the public head of his posterity; (4) Also, that by trying Adam God tried the *race*. ..... (5) It is evident from Rom. v. 15, etc., that we *are* connected with the sin of Adam." This leads to the subject of human depravity.

As we have said, on full definition of sin is attempted in the text. Under the head of "total depravity," the proposition is simply: "All men, if the grace of God does not renew them, are at *heart* entirely sinful. We cannot say that everything in man, e. g. his *intellect*, his *desire* for *food*, etc., is sinful, but only his *heart*." But from the quotations already given it is evident that Mr. Stoddard reckoned *voluntary action* essential to the idea of sin. The following passage illustrates the point still further: "But do not wicked men love each other, and is not *love* a good thing? *Ans.* It is well, but it is not always holiness. Men may love each other just as a dog loves his master (*instinct*, not *principle*). So of compassion. In passing over a battle-field, many wicked men will weep, but a good man may not. This is *nature*, and not *holiness*. ..... The 'amiable young man' lacked *one* thing, and so lacked everything. 'These things are good.' Good! So is a grindstone good, and calomel and rhubarb." By the light of these expressions we are aided in determining what was his belief on the subject of *native depravity*. Under this head he says: "All men by birth have a sinful and corrupt nature." What he means by the phrase *sinful nature* is evident from the quotations already given. In developing this proposition he uses such illustrations as the following: "We say, a tiger is fierce by nature. A man is noble by nature. A rose has a pleasant smell by nature." And he concludes by saying: "Sin, then, comes from a corrupt nature and nothing else." In a note he adds: "How is it *just* in God to bring us into the world with such a nature?' A great question. *Ans.*

This nature does not *compel* us to sin. And we are not punished for our *nature*, but for our *sin*. The *nature* we cannot help, but the *sin* we are responsible for. I cannot go into this subject here, and do not need to in my classes; but I must record my conviction that we are not *guilty* of *original* sin. It is enough that we are guilty for that which is *voluntary*."

What Mr. Stoddard says on the subject of the will, ability, etc., is only incidental; but his views are sufficiently indicated. We have already seen that he makes moral character consist in voluntary *choice*. And he does not make this a mere Hobson's choice. "God," he says, "so created man that he is free to do good or to do evil..... If we then choose evil, it is *our* fault and not the fault of God." "This, then, is our answer to a man who says 'God has decreed all my actions, whether good or evil, and I cannot help myself, and I am not guilty if I do wrong.' We answer, 'you *know* that you are *free;* you can do *right* or *wrong*, *just as you please*.' And that there is no catch in these last words, is evident from this: "Every man *knows* that he is *free*, not only in his external actions, but also in his *will*." To the question: "Can a man thwart the purposes of God?" he answers: "Perhaps they have this *natural* power." In explaining the doctrine of final perseverance, he remarks: "We do not say that it is *impossible* for them to *destroy themselves*. They are free; God does not force." Speaking of the influence of the Spirit, he says: "Can man resist this converter? *Ans.* In one respect he can, and often does. ..... We have *power* to resist and drive away from our hearts the Holy Spirit. But when he comes as our *renewer*, we *do not* resist."

Of the atonement, no formal definition is given. The doctrine is argued mostly from the scriptures. There was no occasion for entering into a minute discussion of the general principles underlying the work of redemption. The Nestorians were not inclined to that perversion of the doctrine which the New England theologians of the last

century encountered, and which obliged them to restate the doctrine more carefully. We find little that is more explicit than such general expressions as these: "Christ, who was perfectly holy, and who did not deserve to suffer, died for our sins." "His sufferings were in place of ours." "The meaning [of the passages 'he bare the sins of many,' etc.] is, that Christ bears the *punishment*." "Paul says it was by the *obedience* of Christ that we are made righteous..... The meaning is, '*his obedient life and his obedient death*.' ..... The perfect obedience of Christ, separately considered, i. e. disconnected with his *death*, is never mentioned as *meritorious*." In a note under the subject of Christ's intercession, he has some remarks which give some clue to his dogmatic view of the atonement, though he expresses himself hesitatingly. "What is the meaning of '*plead*,' as we use it in English in reference to Christ? Is it to plead as an *advocate* and *claim* forgiveness as a right, or to plead as a *suppliant* and beg it as a *favor*?..... Dwight says: 'Intercession in its very nature involves petition.' This may be doubted. The Nestorians have strongly the idea that Christ *prays* for us in heaven..... Perhaps John xvii. would incline us to think that he *entreats* for us in heaven."

With regard to the *extent* of the atonement, he says that it is evident that God holds out salvation to all." "God sincerely invites all. God has given the sun for all; but if any man wish to live in a dungeon, the sun is not for him." "Salvation is spoken of as for those who are lost, or who perhaps will be lost."

Regeneration is thus defined: "It is not a physical change; not a change of *habits*, e. g. from intemperance to temperance, from lying to honesty, etc. It is a true relish for spiritual things, put in the heart by the Holy Spirit." Respecting man's relation to the Holy Spirit's agency in regeneration, after giving first, as he usually does, the biblical argument, he says: "the Holy Spirit is necessary because the heart of man is *so wicked*..... We have so long loved sin, we are so hard-hearted, that without the Spirit we

shall never repent. In this respect we are crippled, and cannot run in the way to heaven. But it is our fault and not God's..... When God commands us to be holy, we *dare* not answer, 'I cannot.' We know God will not accept such an answer. We understand, then, that the Holy Spirit is necessary, not because God has not given us *power* to repent; but because we have by sin plucked our own wings." "God renews the heart by his Spirit. It is *his* work. Are we not, then, free when we repent? Yes, *yes*..... From some passages of scripture, it is true, it seems as if *God* did all, but from others, as if *we* did all." "This change takes place by the word of God; i. e. the Holy Spirit *uses* the word of God for our awakening and conversion..... In this work *three* things are necessary: (1) the Holy Spirit; (2) the truth of God, i. e. the word of God; ..... (3) the effort of the sinner."

We have alluded to the comparatively large space devoted to the evidences of regeneration. It is easy to see that much might be brought into this discussion and made practical, which others would be more likely to put under other heads and treat more purely as matters of science. Mr. Stoddard, at the conclusion, remarks: "As I have gone so extensively into the subject of regeneration, and especially the *evidences* of it, I do not think it necessary in a *distinct form* to discuss the 'nature of holiness,' 'faith,' 'repentance,' 'adoption,' 'peace of conscience,' 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' and 'justification.' Perhaps, however, the latter ought to be discussed." But it need not be inferred from this last remark that the cardinal doctrine of Protestantism is slighted in these lectures. It is everywhere involved, though nowhere evolved.

The subjects of final perseverance, prayer, fasting, death, the intermediate state, the resurrection, the judgment, and the final condition of the wicked and the righteous, are next treated of, and with the author's usual good sense and fulness of biblical illustration. On positive institutions we find nothing.

Such, in brief, is Mr. Stoddard's theology, so far as it is brought out in these lectures. Having promised not to criticise them, we might here pause. But as the subject is somewhat novel, may it not be "improved" by a few reflections suggested by it?

First. It suggests the importance, to every one holding the position of religious teacher, of *having* a system of theology. Doubtless the author of these lectures will be known to posterity as Stoddard the missionary, not Stoddard the theologian. Did he err, then, in becoming a theological lecturer? It might almost as well be asked, since President Edwards is more commonly spoken of as a theologian than as a Christian, whether he did not err in becoming a Christian. He could not have been so great as a theologian if he had been less a Christian; so Stoddard could not have been so great as a missionary had he been less a theologian. In other words, he could not have been so successful a teacher of Christian doctrine unless he had himself so well apprehended the thing to be taught, that is, unless he had had a theological system of his own. Even on the most cultivated minds we cannot make a strong impression unless we have positive opinions. When the pupils are comparatively unenlightened, it is still more important, if possible, that the teacher have definite and strong convictions. The lectures of Mr. Stoddard show that his love of science was not a love of astronomy merely, nor of any other natural science. He was not a controversialist, and his discussions, therefore, do not have a polemic form; but it can easily be seen that he had definite views on the controverted as well as on the established doctrines of Christianity. And in the main those views are here disclosed. If the form of his propositions does not always suggest the school to which he belonged, it is because there was no occasion for his obtruding on the Nestorian mind distinctions which in other places need to be discussed only because they cannot be overlooked. At the same time, though he addressed those who could not appreciate the nicest metaphysical exactness, he did not

to use language inconsistent with his own metaphysical belief. If he did not give them his system in all its bearings, he yet gave them *his* system. May we not here suggest that, if he found it desirable to be so careful and thorough in his instruction of Nestorians, it can be no less important for pastors of churches in Christian lands to know enough of theology at least to know *what* they believe.

But, in the next place, we are led to remark that it is of still higher importance that a theological teacher have a *practical* system of theology. Without any radical difference of belief, men may differ widely in the impression which they make on others. Some can see a truth clearly and grasp it boldly; but they see it so clearly that, for the time being, they see nothing else; they forget that there are other truths to which it bears relations, and to which it must be adjusted. When one of these other truths does come before them, it takes its turn in being the sum and center of all theology. Explanations and reconciliations they "cannot away with." The doctrine of such men may possibly be light from heaven, but it is too often light that leads astray. Others fail in just the opposite way. Nothing ever stands out before them with sufficient prominence to rivet their attention. They get so high above the ocean of truth that at every glance they "grasp in all the shore." But of course they see everything through a glass darkly. Their system is, even to themselves, a rigid and unimpressive thing; to others, who look with different eyes and from a different point of view, it may seem not only unimpressive, but false. More truthful as well as more useful theologians are those who love truth with such ardor that any doctrine, when it comes to be examined, is fresh and stimulating, but is not allowed to exclude others; who can distinguish between their own idiosyncrasies of temperament and the character of men in general, and who in the communication of their ideas have in mind something besides the ideas themselves. Among the latter we may safely class Mr. Stoddard. There is a business-like air

about his lectures. He says nothing for the sake of saying it — nothing for the sake of rounding out his discussions. He knows where to begin and when to stop. What he says he seems to be saying for something and for somebody. He knew enough to keep much of his knowledge to himself. He had both a warm heart and a clear head.

This leads us to observe, further, that these lectures illustrate the importance, to a religious instructor, of consulting the needs of his pupils rather than any abstract logical standard. Symmetry is a good thing, but the gospel is better than symmetry. Paul made himself "all things to all men." He was the prince of theologians as well as the chief of the apostles, and no one need be afraid to follow his example. Mr. Stoddard was too Pauline to imitate the first Moravian missionaries, who began their labors with the heathen by inflicting on them complete bodies of divinity in the old-fashioned form and proportions. We find on every page evidence that the lectures were prepared for Nestorians, not for an exhibition to the world of his more abstruse speculations, nor, as the prolix congressman said of his tiresome speech, for posterity. Accordingly he omits entirely some topics which we might otherwise expect to find discussed, and others he treats only in notes not belonging to the body of the work. In some cases there are observations not intended to be used at all with his class; in others, they are memoranda designed as hints to be followed out in extemporaneous remarks, or as guides to assist in further investigation. It is interesting to notice, in these instances, how he thought it necessary to caution himself against saying anything that could be misunderstood. Thus, having alluded to the docrine of verbal inspiration and to the objections against inspiration drawn from improprieties in the private conduct of the sacred writers, he says: "If I introduce this, be VERY CAREFUL to be explicit." On the subject of immortality he remarks: "To a thinking mind, the law of continuance, as applied to this subject, has much force; but I doubt whether it is worth while to bring

it before the class." For the same reason, we suppose, he passes by, without even an allusion, all *a priori* arguments for the divine existence. The doctrine of eternal punishment, as not being questioned by Nestorians, he barely states without argument; but the *nature* of future punishment, as liable to be misunderstood by a superstitious people, he carefully considers. More space is occupied in disproving the claim of the Koran to divine inspiration than in elucidating the doctrine of the Trinity. Less is said about the justice of God than about evil angels. Three pages are devoted to the subject of fasting; none to a formal discussion of the doctrine of the will. In regard to regeneration, the space devoted to a statement of its *evidences* is much greater than is given to all the other questions connected with it. The subject of prayer is treated at considerable length; the philosophy of the atonement not at all. The fact of universal, total, and native depravity is strongly insisted on; but no scientific definition of depravity or of sin is given. In all this we see how much more careful the missionary was to adapt his lectures to the practical wants of the Nestorians than to satisfy his own mind by a full investigation and solution of the knotty questions of theology. It was more important to guard his scholars against superstitious notions respecting demoniacal possessions than against heretical notions respecting original sin. It was of more consequence to expose the unimportance of forms, of which they were likely to make a bad use, than to introduce speculations of which they would probably make no use at all. To a people having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, it was more needful to distinguish the true from the fallacious signs of a regenerated heart, than to be ever so explicit about the mode and the instruments of the regenerating process.

Another thing suggested by reading these lectures is the beauty of *simplicity* in stating, discussing, and illustrating religious truth. This can be fully appreciated only by one who reads the whole work. Its character in this respect

cannot well be considered apart from the character of the author. Dr. Perkins, in the sermon (still in manuscript) preached at Mr. Stoddard's funeral, says of him: "How strikingly does the Saviour's brief commendation of Nathanael describe our departed brother! What a mirror of openness, sincerity, and ingenuousness was that noble face! ..... We never knew him pen an ambiguous, much less a guileful, sentence. We never knew him utter an ambiguous, much less a guileful, word. We never knew him perform an unmanly or disingenuous act. It has well been said of him by one of our number, that his heart was a transparent crystal; and his entire character and conduct were but the visible impersonation of such a heart." Carlini, while he was convulsing Paris with laughter by his comic talent, was advised by a physician, personally unacquainted with him, to hear Carlini to be relieved from mental depression. Cowper was in the lowest depths of despondency when he wrote John Gilpin. Profligate men have written some of our best hymns. Stage actors at their option can exhibit almost any phase of emotion. Such apparent inconsistencies do not always imply deception; but the most genuine simplicity, the most healthful state of mind and of body, will hardly find room for them. Mr. Stoddard's simplicity was not a painful fear of paradoxes or strong statements; it was not an obstinate partiality for favorite notions; it was not feebleness or narrowness of mind. A simple man may have many *sides*, but no *folds*. He may exhibit the most various, and even the most opposite traits of character, if that opposition does not imply duplicity. Satisfaction will not be expressed by the lip, when indignation is felt in the heart. Certainty will not be attested by the pen, when doubt prevails in the mind. No effort will be made to excite emotions for which no just ground is seen. But there may be conjoined in the same man, as there were in Mr. Stoddard, intellectual force with childlike artlessness; keenness of observation with an all-embracing charity; deep piety with habitual cheerfulness; enthusiasm with practical

wisdom; zeal for scientific pursuits with equal zeal for the salvation of souls. He could talk of himself without egotism, of others without envy or resentment. He was humorous without lacking Christian sobriety. He mourned over the wickedness of men without losing his buoyancy of spirits or his faith in God. The charm of his character consisted in this versatility, and the ease with which he could give play to each emotion in its proper time. All this is daguerreotyped in these lectures. He wrote as he thought and felt. He himself says: "As to the style, there is no style to it. I have generally thought in Syriac, and very often expressed myself, half-unconsciously, in the Syriac idiom. Sometimes I have done this intentionally." There is certainly no stiffness in the style, nor is there any confusion in the thought. He is not brilliant, but he is transparent. His disquisitions do not dazzle, but the truth shines through them with uncommon clearness. They were designed for comparatively uncultivated minds, but the most cultivated cannot fail to be stimulated by them. Stories written for children often convey lessons of the highest wisdom to men. When Mr. Stoddard remarks, "Faith and unbelief, love and enmity, seem sometimes mixed," it neither obscures nor belittles the subject to jot down as a memorandum: "e. g. if my beloved son is taken away." In some circumstances, he would not thus introduce himself; but, considering his relations to the Nestorians, we discover not only no breach of good taste, but a delightful evidence of his piety, when he illustrates the power of prayer by an allusion to the prayers of his mother and grandmother for him. He never dwells long on a subject which he cannot make clear and practical. He deals in no fanciful speculations respecting the nature and occupations of angels, no metaphysical jugglery in explaining the nature of Christ's sonship, no elaborate guesses at a solution of the problem of the origin of evil. "To all such questions the Bible gives no answer, and how can I?" he says in respect to the rationale of the resurrection. "It is not profitable,"

he observes, when speaking of the first sin in Paradise, "for me to discuss here, or indeed *anywhere* with Nestorians, the question how a holy being can become sinful. When I *find out*, I shall be glad to inform the world." This language well illustrates the spirit with which he treats every other topic. But what he does profess to understand, he aims to elucidate and enforce. We cannot otherwise so well convey an idea of his style in the illustration of doctrines as by giving a few miscellaneous quotations. "The evidences [of regeneration] are good, but piety in his heart is so *faint* that it is with difficulty seen. He needs a microscope to find it. A dove looks like a raven when *first hatched*." "There are many monks who have given up the wealth and pleasures and honors of the world. But do they abase themselves? No. They are quite filled with pride and self-righteousness. They have driven out one *black* devil, and brought in seven *white* ones." "Why is it [the judgment] appointed? To show before all the universe that God is *just*, and that sinners are *unjust*. Each one will of course be judged at death, but it is necessary that there be a *great divan* of the universe." Passing from natural to revealed religion, he remarks: "Up to this time we have pretended that we were heathen, but it has been *mere pretence*. Just as if we should shut our eyes and imagine how it would seem if it had always been dark and we never had seen the light of the sun. Of course we could not imagine correctly. So we have gained light from the Bible, and this enables us to study nature as no heathen ever can or will." To illustrate the need of revelation, he says: "The king does not say: 'Of course my subjects will learn from this thing and that, my will'; but he gives a *firman* and puts on it his own seal. . . . . It is then fitting that God should give us a book in which he has perfectly made known his will. If he has *not* given it, alas for us! Did not God make man? And shall he not *reveal* himself to him? Shall not a father speak to his own child? If absent, will he not *write* him?" To show that God's purposes must extend

events, he uses the following illustration: "If God had designed me as a preacher to the Nestorians, had made me the child of pious parents, and instructed me, etc., inclined my heart to come, guided the vessel over the ocean, so that I had reached Trebizond in safety; yet if I had then mounted a vicious horse, which God had not paid attention to, and been thrown off and killed, God's whole plan would have been frustrated by this horse, and the maker of heaven and earth would have been confounded." "A miracle is *God's great seal.* It shows that the firman is genuine and authoritative." "If God without punishment should pardon sin, his kingdom would perish. He would show that he was not a wise king. He would, by such a course, injure all the universe. A human soul is exceedingly valuable; but it is better that every soul should be *blotted out of existence* than that there should be any stain on the purity and lustre of the King of kings. Why? In one moment, by *one word*, he could create a better and more numerous race than that of Adam, but a blot on him could never be wiped out."

Mr. Stoddard's lectures are peculiarly interesting, we remark finally, because of the aid which they render in answering the question: What kind of theology can be used to the best advantage the world over? As Christianity is the religion destined to prevail over all others, there should be, in possibility at least, a scientific statement of Christian truth suited to all classes of men. The several doctrines need not always be put in the same rhetorical form, nor be made to assume the same relative proportions. This must depend on the habits and capacities of the learners. But the substance should be everywhere the same. The best test of the truthfulness of a theological creed is: Can it be preached safely and successfully at all times and in all places?

Mr. Stoddard is the only missionary, so far as we know, who has prepared for his people so elaborate and systematic a treatise on theology. We therefore cannot be certain that another type of theological instruction might not be a better

auxiliary in the work of Christian missions. It is true, too, that Mr. Stoddard was prevented by his death from giving to his work the revision which he thought it needed before being published. Nevertheless, until some one proves himself a more successful missionary than Mr. Stoddard, and that by a course widely different from his, the presumption will be that these lectures are of the stamp required on missionary ground. In one respect they certainly are: they abound in well-chosen biblical quotations and references. Mr. Stoddard himself once wrote to a theological student: "If you were to read what I have prepared, I do not believe that, in *general*, you could tell whether I was Old school or New school, but I think you would admit that I had got in a good deal of the Bible." We can testify that this is so. And it is gratifying to know that the lectures were the means of greatly aiding and stimulating the Nestorian students in their study of the Bible. More than this, they are still used with marked success as a text-book, not only at the male seminary, but at the female also. Mr. Stoddard's works follow him. This might not have been so, had his theology been less a biblical theology, and more a display of himself as a theological athlete. If this fails to satisfy one who examines it for the sake of gratifying a curiosity respecting the author's views on unimportant minutiae of doctrine, it is eminently satisfactory to one who looks at it with reference to its own object. One cannot read it without gaining a new conception of the richness and fulness of the Christian scheme of doctrine. It affords a proof that the loftiest truths can be made subservient to the spiritual growth of the humblest believer; it shows how the religion of Christ is fitted to the wants of every race; it brings us into closer sympathy with the great work of saving the heathen world, and it encourages us to hope for the speedy coming of the day when mount Zion shall be the joy of the whole earth.