

# ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis THE THEOLOGY OF ANDREW FULLER AND ITS RELATION TO CALVINISM.

## Part I. Historical.

Andrew Fuller, (1754-1815), a farmer's son, grew up in a hyper-Calvinist environment. After spiritual struggle he was converted, baptized, and joined the Soham Baptist Church. Theological controversy on sinful man's ability caused division in the Church, and the Minister left. Fuller, encouraged to preach, became the Minister in 1775. He began to regard the hyper-Calvinist position as unbiblical, and examined its whole basis, probably reading Calvin. Robert Hall, Senior, introduced Fuller to the writings of Jonathan Edwards, but his influence was less than is usually assumed.

Fuller moved to be Minister at Kettering in 1783. He found congenial friends in Ryland, Sutcliff, and Carey. Through united labours, theological, devotional, and practical, the Baptist Missionary Society was founded in 1792, with Fuller the first Secretary. Advocating the cause he travelled much, including five visits to Scotland, where he met Thomas Chalmers. Theological controversy with Socinians, Deists, and Universalists, followed various writings of Fuller. Worn out by his labours he died at Kettering.

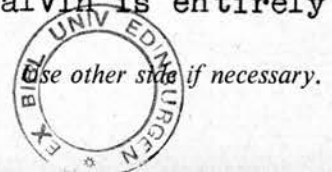
## Part II. Theological.

On settling at Kettering, Fuller offered a Confession of Faith. It makes a useful beginning for a comparison of Fuller's theology with that of Calvin. Its themes, developed in Fuller's writings, are similar to much in Calvin.

1. The existence of God is known to all through His works; the nature of God as Triune is given in the Bible. 2. Revelation is a free Divine activity, only truly known in Christ. 3. The dual character of the Bible as inspired by God yet written by man is recognised. 4. Man, made in the Divine image, has lost his rectitude by the Fall. Physical and psychological capacities work amiss. Though man is impotent through sin, he is nevertheless accountable, and must be called to repent. God's Spirit uses the preached invitations to bring men to faith, which is the total response of mind, heart and will. 5. Election, which is from eternity to eternity, is independent of foreknowledge; reprobation is the unhappy reverse. Fuller softens the latter by emphasis on the manifest cause in man's sin, over against the hidden cause in God's counsel in Election. 6. Signs of the Covenant Theology appear in the form of Fuller's thought on the everlasting covenant of grace, gradually made known, whose content, though not its form of administration, is always the same. 7. Perseverance is the gift of God, not a supreme effort of man.

8. Calvin and Fuller disagree completely on the mode and subject of Baptism, but have some curious similarities on the nature of the sacrament. Fuller insists that Holy Communion is only for immersed believers. 9. Eschatological expectations are similar in Calvin and Fuller, though Fuller has some temporal hopes associated with his view of the Apocalypse. 10. At the Last Judgement, which the Second Advent introduces, the cause of God is fully and finally vindicated.

Two conclusions: 1. Fuller read widely in Calvin. 2. Fuller's claim to be a Calvinist after the pattern of John Calvin is entirely substantiated.



THE THEOLOGY OF ANDREW FULLER AND ITS RELATION  
TO CALVINISM

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the Faculty of Divinity,  
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By  
Arthur Henry Kirkby

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## INTRODUCTION.

The scope of this dissertation needs to be clearly defined at the beginning. It is a study of the theology of Andrew Fuller, (1754 - 1815), in an attempt to determine precisely how far it may be said to be Calvinist, in the sense of being a reflection of the theology of John Calvin.

"Calvinism" is an ambiguous word, and can mean many things, the system of John Calvin, the scholastic interpretations of that system in the centuries after him, or the wildest caricature of the Genevan's theology, such as is found in Burns' satire, "Holy Willie's Prayer." In the title of this study it has the limited, but proper and original meaning, of the theology of the Genevan Reformer.

Andrew Fuller claimed that strict Calvinism was his system, but many of his contemporaries believed that he was departing from Calvinist teaching. He certainly did depart from some of the so-called Calvinist beliefs of the 18th century, beliefs which he named hyper-Calvinist, but it was his conviction that he was leaving a false Calvinism, and returning to the true Calvinism of the Reformer.

This study is not concerned to follow in any detail the way in which Fuller differed from his denominational contemporaries or predecessors, such as Gill and Brine, who adopted the hyper-Calvinist position. It is an

attempt to make a critical examination of the claim of Fuller by a direct comparison of his beliefs with those of John Calvin. Such a comparison will make it clear that Fuller was entirely justified in claiming that his system of theology was Calvinist after the pattern of the man of Geneva.

It is fairly clear how Andrew Fuller reached this theological position. First, he was trained in a Calvinist environment, and his first theological thinking was an effort to grapple with some of the subjects raised there. The environment was hyper-Calvinist, but as he reflected and read, and pondered on the convictions of the people there in the light of the Bible, he found himself moving away from this so-called Calvinism.

Secondly, he read some of the works of John Calvin. Many of them were available in English. Fuller's knowledge of Calvin's works is larger than is customarily acknowledged.

Thirdly, he read and thought about other Calvinist writers, of whom the most important was Jonathan Edwards. Some of Edwards' books were favourites among the Northamptonshire group of Ministers, Fuller, Ryland, Sutcliff, and Carey. The influence of Edwards, however, was later and less important in the case of Fuller than for the others.

We proceed in the study from an historical examination of Fuller's life and the development of his thought, to a consideration of his theology, first as it is briefly presented in his Confession of 1783, and then as it is more adequately presented in his later writings. The beliefs in this theology are compared in detail with the same beliefs as they are found in John Calvin, in his Institutes, Commentaries, Sermons, and Treatises, but chiefly in the Institutes.

As far as possible these writers have been allowed to speak for themselves, with the minimum of comment and interpretation. In this way the resemblances of thought and of expression are more plainly seen, and the genuine Calvinism of Andrew Fuller is the more effectively revealed.

Some brief comments need to be made about quotations, and what may seem to be irregularities in spelling. The Calvin quotations are mainly taken from Henry Beveridge's translation for the Institutes, and for the Commentaries from those of the Calvin Translation Society. Those from the Treatises are taken from the modern edition of J. K. S. Reid, in Vol. XXII of the series, "Library of Christian Classics." Citations from Fuller are taken, in the main, from the one volume edition of his collected

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"Works," published with a Memoir by his son Andrew Gunton Fuller, in 1831. His Letters have also been carefully examined, and other quotations come from them. A detailed list of the Letters is given in the Bibliography. Some quotations are taken from his published writings in religious magazines. (Some of these pieces are in his collected "Works.")

The spelling and punctuation in these writings has been followed exactly as they are in the printed editions. Hence the modern custom of using capital letters whenever the Deity is indirectly referred to in pronouns is not to be found in the quotations, though it is used elsewhere in the text of this study.

Certain acknowledgments must be made. First, I am most grateful to my Supervisors, the Reverend Professor J. H. S. Burleigh, D.D., and the Reverend Professor T. F. Torrance, D. D., whose friendly interest and encouragement have been such a help. The willing assistance of various Librarians and their Assistants must be mentioned, in particular Miss Leslie of New College Library, Edinburgh, Miss Joyce Booth of Regent's Park College Library, Oxford, and the staffs at Dr. Williams's Library, Gordon Square, London, the John Rylands' Library, Manchester, and the British Museum. For all the help I offer grateful thanks.

THE THEOLOGY OF ANDREW FULLER AND ITS RELATION  
TO CALVINISM.

SECTION I Historical.

Part 1 Fuller's Life.

Andrew Fuller was born at Wicken, near Ely, in Cambridgeshire, on the 6th of February 1754, the youngest son of Robert Fuller, a farmer. In 1761 the father moved to the village of Soham, and there Andrew Fuller's first work was assisting on the farm. He had little formal education, receiving only "the barest rudiments of English instruction," as Andrew Gunton Fuller tells in the Memoirs of his father.<sup>1</sup> In a Letter to Mr. M'Lean in 1796, Andrew Fuller wrote: "I was a Farmer. I have sometimes regretted my want of learning."<sup>2</sup> It seems that he had a high place at school, for he tells in a Letter to Dr. Ryland<sup>3</sup> that there was an opinion in the village that while at school he was more learned than the master.

Fuller's home was a Christian one, and good influences

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1. Op. cit. p. xv.

2. This is published in the volume of Fuller's "Miscellaneous Works," in an article entitled "Discipline of the English and Scottish Baptist Churches," and also in the New Evangelical Magazine for 1816, p. 76.

3. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. John Ryland, p. 50.

therefore surrounded him. Outside his home, the influence of some of his companions was not so wholesome. After a period of uncertainty he was converted,<sup>1</sup> and began to take an active part in the life of the little Baptist Church in the village. About this time Fuller had begun to read carefully, and a further impetus to this study was given by a controversy in the Church. It arose on a point of doctrine, and one result was the resignation of the Minister, but another was careful thought and reading by young Andrew Fuller on the matter under discussion.

The controversy split the Church, but it thrust responsibility for leadership upon any who had the capacity to bear it. Encouraged by Mr. Diver, an older man who proved to be a good friend, Andrew Fuller learned to take part in the services of this Church. The gifts of the young man as an expounder of the Scriptures were recognised, and having gained the confidence of the little congregation, he was called in 1774 to be the Pastor.

The eight years spent at Soham were hard years, but very useful years. The hardships arose partly from financial difficulties, for he had only £13 a year on which to support himself and his wife and family. Early in

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1. This event is dealt with more fully below, pages 39-41

his ministry he had married Miss Gardiner of Burwell, Cambridgeshire. He tried to supplement the meagre stipend that the Church was able to pay, first by running a shop, and then a school, but neither venture was successful. Some of the Soham difficulties arose from the character of the people in the Church, who failed to support him as they ought to have done, and were too easily swayed by "every wind of doctrine." They were afflicted with a common complaint of the little village community, the gossiping, critical tongue.

The years at Soham, however, were very profitable years for Andrew Fuller in other ways. During that time he laid the foundation of his theological knowledge by an intensive grappling with the great themes of revelation. John Stoughton says of him that he was "not a broad reader," but "was a deep thinker."<sup>1</sup> He had very few books to consult, apart from the Bible, and knew very little of theological writers. When Robert Hall, Senior, of Arnesby, advised him to read Edwards "On the Will," Fuller did not know that he meant the New England divine Jonathan Edwards, and obtained a volume by a Dr. Edwards of Cambridge. Later, when he was Minister at Kettering, somebody commented on the small library that

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1. "Religion in England," Vol. I, p. 262

he had, and compared it with the large library of Mr. Toller, his Independent neighbour. Fuller said: "Mr. Toller reads books and I write them!" <sup>1</sup>

Robert Hall, Senior, suggested the name of Andrew Fuller to the Baptist Church at Kettering. The Pastor of that Church had long been ill, and could not resume his responsibilities. The Kettering Church heard Andrew Fuller and sent him a call to become their Minister. This call was considered for a very long time. Fuller was quite uncertain what to do, and consulted numerous people before he finally decided to accept the call.

Fuller visited Kettering before the Association Meetings of June 1781, and consulted Robert Hall, Senior, with whom he had a useful conversation. After the Meetings he spoke to nine of the Ministers about what he ought to do, to Messrs. Booth, Evans, Gill, Guy, Hall, Hopper, and the Rylands, Senior and Junior. They all agreed that he should move from Soham to Kettering. Not content with this advice, Fuller went to Cambridge to speak to Robert Robinson who said that he should spend a further year at Soham, and then if the situation were not changed, he should move.

In writing of Andrew Fuller's hesitation, Dr. Ryland

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1. "Religion in England," Vol. 1, p. 262

says: "Men who fear not God would risk the welfare of a nation with fewer searchings of heart than it cost him to determine whether he should leave a little Dissenting Church, scarcely containing forty members besides himself and his wife." <sup>1</sup> The entries in Fuller's diary and the contents of his Letters at this period make very plain the uncertainty that so often possessed him.

From 1782 until his death on May 7th 1815, Andrew Fuller was the Minister of the Baptist Church at Kettering. He was acquainted with a number of the Ministers in the area, members of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association. A closer contact with kindred spirits like John Sutcliff of Olney, John Ryland of Northampton, and William Carey of Moulton, (and later of Leicester), was now possible. Under their leadership a great period of renewal in the life of the Particular Baptist denomination began.

Several things may be noted in connection with this renewal. 1. There was a theological awakening, chiefly encouraged by Andrew Fuller. He published in 1784 a book entitled "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation," in which he openly broke with the rigid Calvinism characteristic of his denomination during the earlier years of the century. The specific nature of the break is discussed

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," p. 71.

in detail below.

2. There was a spiritual awakening encouraged chiefly by John Sutcliff. Some of the story of this spiritual awakening is given by Dr. E. A. Payne in his "Prayer Call of 1784." A copy of Jonathan Edwards' book "Humble Attempt" was sent to Dr. Ryland of Northampton by Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh. "Humble Attempt" is an abbreviation of a title of 186 words. The writer's intention was "An Humble Attempt to promote an explicit agreement and visible union of God's people through the world, in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion, and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom on earth." Dr. Ryland passed on the copy of this book to John Sutcliff.

A concern for the prayer life of the Association had been apparent for some years, and many exhortations had been made at Association Meetings. The occasion for an intensification of the prayer life of the Ministers and members was this book by Jonathan Edwards. It is of some interest to note that the writing of the book followed the receipt of a "Memorial" from certain Scottish Ministers who in 1744 were constrained to engage in extraordinary prayer and fasting for revival within the Church.

Stimulated by his reading of Edwards' "Humble Attempt,"

John Sutcliff persuaded the others to read it also, and pressed upon them the need for more prayer. In 1784 they issued a Prayer Call to the Association.

3. There was a missionary awakening encouraged chiefly by William Carey. Carey kept pressing upon his brethren the need to take the Gospel to all men, even to those in far heathen lands, for the command of our Lord to go into all the world was still obligatory. If the Gospel were "worthy of all acceptation," as Fuller said, it was worthy of acceptance by the savage peoples of other lands. If they were engaged in praying for the Kingdom, as John Sutcliff urged them to do, they should be engaged also in doing something for the Kingdom.

At Nottingham in May 1792, Carey preached to the Association. His text was Isaiah 54, 2. On this he based his great twofold declaration. "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God." He prevailed upon his brethren, and particularly upon Andrew Fuller, to consider doing something, and at the next Ministers' Meeting in Kettering, on October 2nd, 1792, in the house of a certain Mrs. Wallis, a widow who was a member of Fuller's Church, the Baptist Missionary Society was founded. The solemn resolution adopted read as follows: "Humbly desirous of making an effort for the propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen, according to the recommend-

ations of Carey's Enquiry, we unanimously resolve to act in Society together for this purpose; and as, in the divided state of Christendom, each denomination, by exerting itself separately, seems likeliest to accomplish the great end, we name this the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen." Andrew Fuller was appointed the first Secretary of this Society.

The years from 1782 to 1792 had been busy years for Andrew Fuller. His first substantial work, <sup>1</sup> "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation" led to a long controversy on the nature of faith. It was begun by the hyper-Calvinists of his own denomination, but was continued by others of the General Baptist group, and later by Archibald M'Lean, leader of the Scotch Baptists.

Some of the earliest critics did not do much credit to themselves by the abusive way in which they tried to assail the new point of view. A. G. Fuller, in the Memoirs of his father, <sup>2</sup> tells of a neighbouring Minister, (whose name is charitably withheld), who asked, in the name of friendship to see the manuscript of this book.

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1. Earlier in 1784 Fuller had published a Sermon, "The Nature and Importance of walking by Faith."

2. Op. cit. p. xli

It was loaned but was returned with a letter "replete with illiterate abuse." <sup>1</sup> Quite firmly but graciously Andrew Fuller replied, pointing out the unfairness of many criticisms, but the critic was ready to continue the controversy only with further letters of abuse.

There were others, of course, who discussed the subjects raised by Fuller's work in the manner of "civilised intercourse," as A. G. Fuller describes it. <sup>2</sup> Among such were A. Booth, A. M'Lean, and Dan Taylor.

The opposition to Fuller's presentation of the Gospel for many years, and in many places. For example, in the "Church Book" of the Attleborough (Norfolk) Baptist Church there is an entry of 1832 referring to events of November/December 1830, fifteen years after Fuller's death. It reads: "Mr. Kinghorn was here, who encouraged us to continue inviting Mr. Green, though the Diss Church had requested him to be silent, and threatened to separate him if he continued to preach, as they accused him of preaching, the sentiments of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller of Kettering." <sup>3</sup>

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1. Op. cit. p. xli

2. Ibid. p. xli

3. The writer is indebted to his friend the Rev. J. A. Smallbone, Minister of the Baptist Churches at Wymondham and Attleborough, for this quotation.

J. C. Philpot, writing from Stamford on March 24th 1842, says: "A friend of mine brought me word the other day that some of the Bedfordshire Calvinists had spread a report that I was turned Baxterian or Fullerite. Had I no other preservative, I think my daily and almost hourly sense of my miserable helplessness and thorough impotency to raise up my soul to one act of faith, hope or love would keep me from assenting to Andrew Fuller's lies. Nothing suits my soul but sovereign, omnipotent, and superabounding grace. I am no common sinner, and must therefore have no common grace." <sup>1</sup>

In the "Gospel Standard," No. 83, for November 1842, there is a review by the Editor of the book, "A Defence of Particular Redemption; wherein the Doctrine of the late Mr. Fuller, relative to the Atonement of Christ, is tried by the Word of God. In Four Letters to a Baptist Minister." This book was written by William Rushton, Jr., of Liverpool. The Editor strongly approves of the criticisms of Andrew Fuller made in the book. "Andrew Fuller was indeed a most sophisticated and plausible reasoner; and had the art of dressing out his statements in a manner wonderfully calculated to lay hold of the ignorant and unstable." He continues: "Fuller's sophistry and real Arminianism, in spite

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1. "The Seceders," Vol. II, by J. C. Philpot.

of all his pretended Calvinism, are so clearly exposed and so scripturally overthrown, that we know no better book of the kind to put into the hands of those who are halting between two opinions, and are half caught in that cobweb which Fuller's disciples are so craftily winding around the weak and wavering." <sup>1</sup>

In contrast to these is a letter at St. Mary's Baptist Church, Norwich, addressed to Joseph Kinghorn, the Minister. It is dated 23rd March 1797. It is written by three deacons of the Baptist Church meeting in George Street, Hull, who ask Mr. Kinghorn if he can help them to find a Minister "that may be acceptable and useful..... We should wish to have a person of some literature and of good talents, orthodox yet liberal in his sentiments, as well as a lively, zealous and affectionate preacher." <sup>2</sup> There is a marginal note explaining the meaning of the word "orthodox." It says, "of Mr. Fuller's sentiments."

The story of the spread of Fuller's theology in Wales is a special study in itself. It has been dealt with in a work in Welsh, called "Ffwleriaeth yng Nghymru," published in 1936, written by J. Ellis Jones. There is a summary of this in an Appendix to a Dissertation pre-

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1. Op. cit. p. 316

2. The writer is grateful to the Rev. J. A. Smallbone for this quotation.

sented to the University of Oxford by D. E. Edwards, "The Influence of Jonathan Edwards on the Religious Life of Britain in the XVIIIth Century and the first half of the XIXth Century." A visit that Fuller paid to Wales is referred to in a Letter of 15th July, 1812. He tells William Ward that before he set out he was led to believe that he would be heard with suspicion because of a notion of <sup>his</sup> not being orthodox. The fears were unfounded for he says, "I never met with kinder or more cordial treatment." <sup>1</sup>

Andrew Fuller was called into a wide field of controversy. Morris, in his Memoirs of Fuller, writes: "It seldom falls to the lot of any author, however eminent, to be called into so wide a field of controversy, or to engage upwards of a dozen writers in succession, each distinguished in their several departments, and on a variety of subjects, connected indeed with religious interests, but demanding the most rigorous exercise of an acute and penetrating judgement and an intimate acquaintance with the whole circle of polemical theology. Here it was that Mr. Fuller found himself at home." <sup>2</sup>

This tribute of a biographer is supported by the contemporary esteem shown towards Andrew Fuller. In

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1. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

2. Op. cit. p. 255

1798, as his son tells, "the college of New Jersey had conferred on him the honorary degree of D. D., the use of which, however, he respectfully declined, alleging his deficiency of those literary qualifications which would justify the assumption of academic honours, as well as his conscientious disapprobation of such distinctions in connexion with religion." <sup>1</sup>

In may 1805 Yale also conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon Andrew Fuller. He wrote and thanked President Dwight for the diploma and his letter, but said that he would not use the title. It is said that when he first received the elaborate and elegant diploma from New Jersey he showed it to some of his friends, and whimsically remarked that he supposed he would have to learn Latin to understand what it said! To the end of his days he continued to be Mr. Fuller.

Another important work of Andrew Fuller, published in 1792, and entitled "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared as to their Moral Tendency," was the occasion for his second big controversy.

The Socinian claims had been growing more pretentious for some little time before the publication of this work, and had caused alarm amongst the more orthodox. Socinians

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1. "Memoirs," by A. G. Fuller, p. lxxii

were pleased to call themselves Rational Christians, The Dissenters, the modern Dissenters. All Protestant Dissenters, including the Unitarians, had united to work for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and this union had caused surprise and confusion in the Church of England, for it was not regarded merely as political but was thought of also as religious, as if Orthodox Dissent, to use B. L. Manning's phrase, <sup>1</sup> were moving towards Socinianism. Dr. Priestley hinted that probably nine tenths of the people would prefer a unitarian to a trinitarian theology.

The concern that was felt by many was expressed in a pamphlet written by the Rev. Samuel Palmer of Hackney. Morris describes this as a call to "the friends of orthodoxy to stand forward and defend their principles, and to state clearly the genuine articles of the Christian faith." <sup>2</sup> Public reaction was very favourable, and Andrew Fuller felt the urge to prepare the kind of defence that was required. His first idea was a short pamphlet, but on the advice of Abraham Booth he greatly enlarged it.

The title of Fuller's work is significant. Dr. Ryland says: "The Socinians who had so frequently indulged

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1. See Preface to "Essays in Orthodox Dissent."

2. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 258

themselves in inveighing, with the utmost vehemence, against the licentious tendency of the Calvinistic system, were much disturbed at having the charge turned against themselves." <sup>1</sup> Morris also mentions "the arrogance of the Socinian party" who so frequently charged "Calvinism with having an immoral tendency." <sup>2</sup>

Numerous articles were published by the Socinians as a counter to Fuller's charges. To some of these he replied in a work of 1797, "Socinianism Indefensible on the Ground of its Moral Tendency: Containing a Reply to Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish."

The next controversy was with the Deists, and it was caused by the publication in 1800 of a book entitled, "The Gospel its own witness: or, the Holy Nature and Divine Harmony of the Christian Religion, contrasted with the Immorality and Absurdity of Deism." Dr. Ryland tells that he received a letter from William Wilberforce after Fuller's death in which he made specific reference to this work, and how highly he regarded it. <sup>3</sup>

A controversy with Universalists was publicly begun in the pages of the Evangelical Magazine where Fuller pub-

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," p. 215
  2. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 257
  3. "Fuller's Memoirs," p. 216. Morris also remarks on Wilberforce's opinion of this work, which he regarded as the most important of all Fuller's writings. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 276

lished the substance of a letter written to a certain Mr. Vidler of Battle, Sussex. <sup>1</sup> No names were disclosed for Fuller used his favourite nom-de-plume of Gaius. This was expanded, and in 1802 was published as "Letters to Mr. Vidler, on the Doctrine of Universal Salvation." It seems that Fuller had a very poor opinion of Vidler, for in a Letter dated 27th October 1804, written to William Ward, he said: "Vidler is little short of a blasphemer, and a man I believe of no principle." <sup>2</sup>

It was almost inevitable that Andrew Fuller would grapple with Sandemanianism, since he had had much correspondence with Archibald M'Lean on the subject. In 1810 he prepared and printed a series of Letters which he called "Strictures on Sandemanianism, in Twelve Letters to a Friend."

In the course of his work as Secretary of the newly formed Missionary Society he was required to defend this cause on a number of occasions. Some influences were working in this country trying to stop the missionary endeavours in India, but these failed to be effective against the general good will of the responsible authorities, who

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1. This Mr. Vidler was a Baptist Minister at Battle. There is an account of him in the "Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society," Vol. I, 1908-1909, pp. 42-55, by F. W. Butt-Thompson.
  2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

were kept well informed by Fuller of the progress of the work and its purpose. Such a work as "An Apology for the late Christian Missions to India," in which he met the arguments in the publications of Mr. Twining, Major Scott Waring, and others, kept serious-minded people aware of the issues in the discussion on the work of the Mission. <sup>1</sup>

The years from 1792 onwards were exceedingly busy years for Fuller as he travelled all over the country on behalf of the Mission. He liked to think that he could raise £1 for the Mission for every mile that he travelled. For example, in a Letter to William Ward, dated 5th September 1814, he tells of various travels. "In the month of July I travelled 600 miles, preached 25 times, collected for the Mission about a pound a mile, which I reckon my old price." <sup>2</sup> In all weathers, with inadequate protection against the elements, he went north, south, east, and west, pleading the cause of the work overseas. He paid five visits to Scotland, one to Ireland, several to Wales, and many to all parts of England.

The five Scottish visits were made in the years 1799,

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1. Among Fuller's Letters are various items of correspondence referring to this controversy, telling of communications that were being sent to responsible leaders.
  2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

1802, 1805, 1808, and 1813. He set out for the first time with some hesitancy. "I am going out for a month altogether, among faces which I have never seen. My spirits revolt at the idea: but duty calls." <sup>1</sup> His hesitation was soon removed, and he wrote in his Journal for October 10th, "Rode to Edinburgh. A view of the sea and other objects was very agreeable." <sup>2</sup>

Fuller extended the range of his travels each time he visited Scotland. In 1799 he preached in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, and Greenock. On the second visit he travelled from Edinburgh to Perth, and then on to Dundee. He returned to Perth and continued to Glasgow and district via Stirling. In a letter to his wife, dated September 4th 1802, he records the odd fact that he bathed in the sea for the first time on September 3rd, but seemed none the worse for it!

A Scottish encounter of some significance took place during this second visit in 1802. During that tour he met a young man named Christopher Anderson who seemed to have fine prospects of a good career. Christopher Anderson had heard Andrew Fuller during the first Scottish tour, and had been much influenced by him, so that he (Anderson)

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 263

2. Quoted by Dr. Ryland in "Fuller's Memoirs," p. 269

had decided to become a Missionary and go to India. The meeting of these men in 1802 was the beginning of a close friendship.

Christopher Anderson was trained for the ministry at Bristol Baptist Academy, and had numerous contacts with the Northants group, for he spent some time at Olney with John Sutcliff. Health difficulties prevented the fulfilling of his ambition to be a Missionary, but the missionary zeal never waned. He was in constant touch with Fuller, and greatly assisted him in the later tours in Scotland. When Andrew Fuller grew less and less able to carry the ever-growing burden of the secretariat, he wished Christopher Anderson to take over the work, and recommended him to the Committee as his successor.<sup>1</sup> After the death of Fuller the Committee, which was not personally acquainted with Carey and his Serampore colleagues, and did not agree with his policy and ideals, caused a period of estrangement and

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1. There are references to the possible succession of Christopher Anderson, both at Kettering and at the Baptist Missionary Society, in numerous letters of Andrew Fuller.

From Kettering	on 10th December 1807	to Wm. Ward.
"	"	" 16th February 1808 to C. Anderson.
"	"	" 4th May 1812 to C. Anderson.
"	"	" 15th May 1812 to J. Marshman.
" Derby	" 15th July 1812	to Wm. Ward.
" Kettering	" 17th November 1812	to Wm. Ward.

difficulty. In the resulting unhappy isolation of Serampore, Scotland remained loyal, and Christopher Anderson was the Secretary. During the 10 years of separation he raised nearly seven thousand pounds for the support of the work.

On the third journey Fuller went farther north. From Edinburgh he travelled to Kirkcaldy, Cupar, Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, and Brechin. Returning south he visited Perth, Glasgow, Paisley, Greenock, Saltcoats, Kilmarnock, Kilwinning, Ayr, and Dumfries. The fourth Scottish trip included most of these places again.

The fifth journey was the most extensive of them all, and included one very interesting event. He journeyed to Scotland by way of Carlisle, and began the tour by preaching at Dumfries, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Irvine, Beith, Saltcoats, Greenock, and Glasgow. From Glasgow he went north by Stirling to Inverness and Dingwall. From Inverness, to which he returned, he proceeded to Nairn, Elgin, Banff, Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Dundee, Cupar, Kirkcaldy, Edinburgh (and district), Haddington, and Dunbar.

The very interesting event of this last Scottish visit was a stay of two nights at Kilmany with Thomas Chalmers. The Baptist missionary venture of 1792 had captured the imagination of people in all parts of the country, and in all denominations. Hanna in his bio-

graphy of Chalmers remarks that "his eyes were fixed with intense interest upon Carey and his coadjutors." <sup>1</sup> In his diary Chalmers records that on August 4th he "was introduced to Mr. Fuller and his companions. Heard Mr. Fuller preach in the evening." <sup>2</sup> William Hanna continues, after further quotations from the diary: "This visit of Mr. Fuller was one of the incidents in his Kilmany life to which Mr. Chalmers always looked back with pride and pleasure. He could not refrain from referring to it when introducing a remark of Mr. Fuller's into one of his theological lectures." <sup>3</sup> There was a mutual attraction, for Fuller in writing to Chalmers after he had returned home said that he never thought of his visit to him but with pleasure. Fuller encouraged Chalmers to preach ex tempore, or simply with notes. After leaving the Kilmany Manse he said to Christopher Anderson, who was his companion: "If that man would but throw away his papers in the pulpit, he might be king of Scotland." <sup>4</sup>

When Chalmers wrote his sermon on "The Universality of the Gospel," Andrew Fuller's "Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation" may not have been far from his mind. Dr. Gilbert Laws in his book on Fuller says: "It is acknow-

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1. "Life of Chalmers," Vol. I, p. 238

2. Ibid. p. 238

3. Ibid. p. 239

4. Ibid. p. 255

ledged that the germ of his (Chalmers') famous series of sermons....on Astronomy and Religion, and published under the title 'Astronomical Discourses,' was derived from Fuller's own chapter on a similar theme in his book 'The Gospel its own Witness.'" <sup>1</sup>

The visit to Ireland was made in June 1804, but Fuller was discouraged by the situation he found there. In a Letter to Dr. Ryland he said: "My heart is dismayed to see the state of things here." <sup>2</sup> Congregations were very small, and there were occasions when no more than 50 were present in a building which could hold 1000. The primary purpose of the visit was the cause of the Mission, but Fuller was also able to give some help to a Baptist Church in Dublin. Theological discussion was inevitable during the visit. A certain Mr. Walker, a Sandemanian, said to Fuller: "There are many who call themselves Calvinists who are as far from the truth as Arminians." Fuller asked to whom he referred, and received the answer: "Those who hold with qualifications as necessary to warrant a sinner's believing." Andrew Fuller declared that he did not know who such were, and disapproved of the belief. The

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1. "Andrew Fuller," by Gilbert Laws, p. 90. Dr. Laws also mentions this in his earlier article on Fuller, published in the Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. II, p. 76.
  2. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 393

conclusion he drew from the conversation was that the Sandemanians confused "pleading for a holy disposition as necessary to believing, (or necessary to incline us to believe) with pleading for it as giving...a warrant to believe." <sup>1</sup>

In a Letter from Dublin, of June 7th 1804, sent to John Sutcliff, Andrew Fuller refers to the difficulties in the Churches in Ireland through "what they call the New Light, i.e. Arianism and Socinianism, Swedenborgianism etc." <sup>2</sup>

The home background of Andrew Fuller must not be neglected in an account of his life. His first marriage was blessed with eleven children, eight of whom died in infancy, or in early childhood. There is a moving account in his Journal of the death of a little girl of six years of age. <sup>3</sup> Towards the end of her life his wife lost her reason, and did not know where she was. At times she had to be restrained by force, and it took all the considerable powers of her husband to hold her when violent attacks came on. Some moments of lucidity were

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 394-395
  2. A copy of this Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.
  3. See Ryland, pp. 437-448

given to her before the end, which came shortly after the birth of a child. This child survived only a few weeks. <sup>1</sup>

Fuller's second marriage, to Miss Ann Coles of Ampt-hill, Bedfordshire, was also fruitful, six children being born to them, of whom three were lost in early childhood. A later family distress that Andrew Fuller had to bear was the waywardness of his eldest son, Robert. An article in the East Midland Baptist Magazine for 1895, written by the Rev. D. P. McPherson, B.D., gives an account of a talk that the writer had with an old lady in Kettering, a certain Mrs. Toon, who was 8 years old at the time of Fuller's death. "She remembered Fuller's greatest grief: a prodigal son had gone abroad and sorrowful tidings came back respecting him. The father was distracted and filled with shame."

Young Robert Fuller left Kettering in 1796 to go to a job in London, but he was back in Kettering the next year. In 1798 he enlisted, but was discharged on the ground that he was apprenticed. The following year he joined the marines, and twelve months later became a sailor on a merchant ship. In 1801 the Press Gang coerced him into naval service by the methods common in that day. Later that year came the news that he had received 300 lashes for some

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1. A full account of Mrs. Fuller's death is given in a Letter to Stephen Gardiner, her father, written from Kettering on August 25th, 1792. It is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

misdemeanour, and had died. This report was soon afterwards contradicted. In July 1804 he was flogged in Ireland for desertion, and such was the effect of the barbaric treatment that he had to be discharged. He eventually returned to the merchant service, and died at sea in 1809, being buried somewhere off Spain.

The father's letters to this wandering lad are full of a great concern for him, not only for his physical welfare, but above all for his spiritual welfare. This is notable in the last letter to his boy, written in February 1809.

Some of the sombre passages in Fuller's Sermons are to be understood only by remembering this background. A passage of exposition on the "Inward Witness of the Spirit, or God speaking peace to His People," has in it a paragraph that is certainly autobiographical, written out of a concern for his son.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the Letters may be quoted. Writing to John Ryland on January 1st 1799, he tells of a recent sermon. "Last Lord's day I preached a sermon to old people from Psa. lxxi, 9, in which 'O Absalom, my son, my son!' had a place. Some significant words follow when his family worries are remembered: "That is a subject I could only

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1. Fuller's "Works," (1 vol. edition), p. 511

touch." <sup>1</sup> A brief comment in a Letter to John Sutcliff on 8th July 1800 is significant. Fuller tells of the son Robert witnessing the baptism of his sister Mary and adds, "Mercy and Judgement still compose my cup." <sup>2</sup>

In a Letter of 28th February 1803, to William Carey, Fuller says: "I have a heavy load in my eldest son, who is become a mere profligate. He is, I suppose, now on board the fleet." <sup>2</sup> In another Letter to William Carey, dated 8th February 1804, he writes: "I have now seven children, the eldest of whom is in the army at this time, a poor unhappy youth." <sup>2</sup>

Writing to John Ryland on July 6th 1804, the day after the return from Ireland, he says: "My poor unhappy son is at Cork. I wrote to him and he to me, while in Ireland. His letter intimated that he had but little hopes of living, having a complaint for several months back in his bowels. He expected to be discharged. I invited him home. Last night on entering my house I found all in deep distress....having learnt by a letter which he wrote to a relation in Cambridgeshire, that his present illness is the effect of having received 350 lashes for desertion!!! In fact he is in a manner killed. I

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 374

2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

do not expect his recovery; or if he should live, that he will ever be able to provide for himself. Yet if this were but the means of bringing him to God, I should rejoice." <sup>1</sup> Writing to John Sutcliff on the same day he says: "Expect my son Robert will soon be at home, if he does not die ere he reaches us." <sup>2</sup>

Worn out by his exertions on behalf of the Mission, Andrew Fuller tried early in 1815 to go to Cheltenham for a rest, but he was unable to make the journey. On a Sunday, May 7th 1815, he died at his home in Kettering, with his family around him. A tribute paid to him by the Rev. Robert Hall is worth quoting.

"I cannot refrain from expressing, in a few words, the sentiments of affectionate veneration with which I always regarded that excellent person while living, and cherish his memory now that he is no more; a man whose sagacity enabled him to penetrate to the depths of every subject he explored, whose conceptions were so powerful and luminous, that what was recondite and original appeared familiar; what was intricate, easy and perspicuous in his hands; equally successful in enforcing the practical,

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 396-397

2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

in stating the theoretical, and discussing the polemical branches of theology: without the advantages of early education, he rose to high distinction among the religious writers of his day, and, in the midst of a most active and laborious life, left monuments of his piety and genius which will survive to distant posterity. Were I making his eulogium, I should necessarily dwell on the spotless integrity of his private life, his fidelity in friendship, his neglect of self-interest, his ardent attachment to truth, and especially the series of increasing labours and exertions in superintending the mission to India, to which he most probably fell a victim. He had nothing feeble or undecisive in his character; but to every undertaking in which he engaged, he brought all the powers of his understanding, all the energies of his heart; and if he were less distinguished by the comprehension than the acumen and solidity of his thoughts - less eminent for the gentler graces than for stern integrity and native grandeur of mind, we have only to remember the necessary limitations of human excellence. While he endeared himself to his denomination by a long course of most useful labour, by his excellent works on the Socinian and deistical controversies, as well as his devotion to the cause of missions, he laid the world under lasting obligations." <sup>1</sup>

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. lxxxvii

Part 2 Fuller's Thought.

The development of Fuller's thought which has been hinted at, or assumed, in the above account of his life, must now be more carefully examined. In so far as it may be briefly explained, the development of his thought is to be associated with three things: first, with his own religious experience of conversion; secondly, with the theological controversy in the Soham Church at the end of Mr. Eve's ministry; and thirdly with the practical problems in the little Church at Soham during his ministry. In all these we shall notice a reaction from the rigid hyper-Calvinism of the Particular Baptist denomination in which he was reared.

The Baptist history of the 17th century has to be followed in two separate bodies, the General Baptists and the Calvinistic Baptists, later to be known as the Particular Baptists. These groups differed on the doctrine of the Atonement, one believing in its general efficacy, and the other believing in its particular efficacy. Various confessions of faith were issued by the Calvinistic Baptists, some with the specific intention of clearing the confusion in many minds that Baptists in Britain were similar to the Munster Anabaptists. In 1646 a London Confession was dedicated to Parliament to try to help to clear

the confusion and to stay slander.

In 1655 an Association of Midland Churches published a confession of faith in 16 articles. As this Association grew, three others developed from it, the West Midland, the Northamptonshire, and the Worcestershire. This fact is noted because Andrew Fuller was a Minister in the Northamptonshire Association.

All the early Confessions emphasised the doctrine of Election, but this in no way hindered the practical work of evangelism. Exposition of the free and sovereign Grace of God was not felt to be out of harmony with regular appeals for decision. This is very evident in the work of John Bunyan, who could write such works as "The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded," and "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ." A similar attitude is found in Thomas Collier, Pastor of a Church near Trowbridge. In 1647 he published his "Body of Divinity," containing 31 chapters and 606 pages. Dr. Whitley says of him: "He does not put Election by any means in the forefront. He does, however, on this larger scale, deal now with Reprobation, and he balances both with Evangelism." <sup>1</sup>

A division of opinion manifested itself very soon after the publication of Collier's work. Nehemiah Cox,

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1. "Calvinism and Evangelism in England," by W. T. Whitley, p. 21

a London Baptist Minister, son of Benjamin Cox, a very rigid Calvinist, disagreed with Collier. Their Associations were drawn into the controversy, and Confessions of Faith were issued by each. The Confession produced by Cox for his Association was a revision of the Westminster Confession. "Cox somewhat softened the Westminster language, threw away the whole section on Reprobation, and slightly humanised the whole," says Dr. W.T. Whitley.<sup>1</sup> The London Baptist Churches approved of this Confession and published it.

After the turbulent years associated with such names as Monmouth and Judge Jeffreys, the divergence of views between London and the West continued. In 1717 the Baptist Fund was established in Bristol, and in London the Particular Baptist Fund was created. It was from this period that the Calvinistic Baptists were known as Particular Baptists.

The succeeding years saw the development of what Joseph Ivimey calls the "non-invitation, non-application scheme."<sup>2</sup> The Baptist preachers were content to expound the doctrines without seeking that any should receive them. A dread fear of Arminianism and Pelagianism

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1. "Calvinism and Evangelism in England," by W.T. Whitley, p. 23

2. "History of the Baptists," by J. Ivimey, Vol.III, p.267

was one of the causes of this barren period.

The first name to note is that of John Skepp, who came from Cambridge to Curriers' Hall Church, London, in 1710. John Brine who followed Skepp was equally rigid. Ivimey says of him: "Even in sermons where the subjects... would have led him to address the unconverted on the necessity of repentance and faith, there is not a syllable addressed to them on any topic." <sup>1</sup>

Another London Minister of the period who "never addressed the ungodly," as Dr. Underwood says, <sup>2</sup> was Dr. John Gill, a man of considerable learning, especially in Rabbinics, who was honoured by Marischal College, Aberdeen, with its Doctorate in Divinity. He believed that although the Spirit of God was always the efficient cause of conversion, sometimes He chose to use the proclamation of the Word as a conveying means.

John Johnson of Liverpool, later a controversialist with Andrew Fuller, taught that faith is simply a grace, and its lack is no sin. The principle of grace believes within a man, not his soul.

This kind of hyper-Calvinism had a paralysing effect on the Baptist Churches, and not on them alone. This type

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1. "History of the Baptists," by J. Ivimey, Vol.III, p.272  
 2. "History of the English Baptists," by A. C. Underwood, p. 135

of high Calvinism had its exponents in other denominations, among the Presbyterians and the Independents, and it had a depressing influence over them. The tendency was to move from this chill Calvinism to Unitarianism. Basil Willey, writing about Dr. Priestley, makes this comment. "Priestley in his development from Calvinism to Unitarianism merely illustrates in epitome what was going on widely among the dissenting congregations in the eighteenth century." <sup>1</sup>

It will be useful at this point to notice the effect of the Evangelical Revival upon the Baptists of the 18th century. The influence of this movement under the Wesleys and Whitefield was quite different in the two bodies of General Baptists and Particular Baptists.

The renewal of life amongst the General Baptists can be traced in various ways to the influence of this Revival. The New Connexion of General Baptists which was formed in 1770, owed a great deal to the new movement. This new body of Arminian Baptists was the result of the coming together of two groups, each of which began with a man called Taylor, one called David Taylor, and the other Dan Taylor. The two are frequently confused by historians.

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1. "The Eighteenth Century Background," by Basil Willey, p. 181

For example, Stoughton, and Skeats and Miall make this mistake. H. W. Clark mentions two men of the surname Taylor, but gives to each the Christian name Dan. On the other hand, W. T. Whitley notices the two, but does not name David Taylor. A. C. Underwood clearly separates the two and names them.

David Taylor was a servant of the Countess of Huntingdon, and began to preach in the villages in Leicestershire somewhere about 1741. Little groups of Christians formed themselves in the villages around Barton Fabis. They built a small chapel at Barton in 1745, and called it Independent. This movement spread, despite very violent opposition, and chapels were built in several nearby towns, such as Hinckley and Loughborough in Leicestershire, and at Melbourne in Derbyshire. Beginning as paedobaptists, they moved from infant sprinkling to infant immersion, and then to the immersion of believers only. By 1760 they had formed themselves into five separate groups.

Dan Taylor, (1738 - 1816), the leader in the formation of the New Connexion, began his religious life among the Methodists. He went long distances as a youth to hear Whitefield and the Wesleys. Although confirmed in the Church of England he joined the Methodists, who recognised his ability, and wanted him to become one of their preachers.

In 1762 he became the Minister of a small group which had broken away from Methodism. When Taylor studied the subject of infant baptism, he became persuaded that it was unscriptural, and asked the Particular Baptist Ministers in the Hebden Bridge district to baptize him and others who were of the same mind. This they refused to do because Taylor and his friends were Arminians, but they told them of Arminian Baptists in Lincolnshire. Taylor and his friend John Slater set out to find them, and eventually found a General Baptist Church at Gamston in Nottinghamshire, whose Minister baptized them. In May 1764 Taylor went to the General Baptist Assembly at Lincoln, and thereafter, as A. C. Underwood says, "assiduously cultivated close relations with his new-found Lincolnshire friends."<sup>1</sup> He also attended the General Baptist Assembly in London.

Dan Taylor's visits to Lincolnshire brought him into touch with the Leicestershire group around Barton Fabis. This group was invited on various occasions to join the Lincolnshire Association. The invitation was refused because of heterodox beliefs in the Association. Dan Taylor decided that it would be good to form a New Connexion of orthodox General Baptists, and this was founded in London on June 6th 1770. Dr. Underwood says of this New Connexion

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1. "History of the English Baptists," by A. C. Underwood, p. 152

that "it was obviously a child of the Methodist Revival, and manifested two Methodist characteristics: strong evangelical zeal and strong corporate feeling. The name chosen was to make it clear that it was Arminian in doctrine, but 'New Connexion' was added to differentiate it from the old General Baptists who had virtually become Unitarian." <sup>1</sup>

It must be added that while the Arminianism of John Wesley appealed to the General Baptists, some of them found his views on baptism not merely unacceptable but also annoying. Wesley irritated all Baptists by his habit of describing them as Anabaptists.

If there were <sup>as</sup> some sympathy towards Wesley and the Methodists in General Baptist circles, there was little or none amongst the Particular Baptists. John Wesley's Arminianism and his paedobaptism were equally detested. Even George Whitefield, though Calvinist in theology, was a little suspect with the Particular Baptists. Indeed, all Calvinistic Dissenters thought they could detect traces of an Arminian accent in his Calvinism. <sup>2</sup> There was some

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1. "History of the English Baptists," p. 153

2. There were a few exceptions. Andrew Gifford was a "steady friend" of Whitefield, as Dr. Underwood says, (p. 159) and attended the stonelaying of the Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road. He edited a volume of Whitefield's sermons. Robert Robinson of Cambridge was converted under Whitefield, and began his ministry in Methodism. John Fawcett was another converted under Whitefield.

justification for that opinion. Whitefield was not primarily a theologian; he was a preacher. His Calvinism was probably learned from correspondence with the Reverend Ralph Erskine, and confirmed in America through his contacts with Jonathan Edwards. He never sought in any systematic way to harmonise his preaching and his theology, and thus preached the universality of redeeming love without any careful regard for the consistency of this with the doctrine of Election.

The Particular Baptist most active in controversy with the Methodists was Dr. Gill. His hyper-Calvinism and his emphasis on believers' baptism were "the two notes of the chord he incessantly struck." <sup>1</sup> Gill and Wesley engaged in a long controversy on the subject of predestination. <sup>2</sup>

When we get to the time of Andrew Full<sup>ly</sup> we discover a continuation of this suspicion, and even detestation, of Methodism and the Wesleys, with an occasional good word for Whitefield. E. A. Payne says that "the powerful forces at work in the mind of young Andrew Fuller.... cannot be traced either to the Wesleys or to George White-

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1. "History of English Nonconformity," by H. W. Clark, Vol. II, p. 251
  2. The details are traced in Dr. R. S. Seymour's thesis on "John Gill, Baptist Theologian." (New College Library, Edinburgh)

field." <sup>1</sup> Fuller's Letters make this abundantly plain. In his Letter to William Ward, dated 21st September 1800, there is a brief comment about preaching. "Shun all asperity, and low wit such as our Methodists affect." <sup>2</sup> In another Letter, also to Ward, written on 16th July 1809, there is some strong criticism of Wesley. "If Mr. W. <sup>3</sup> had been a baptist I could not have joined him at the Lord's Supper. It is not for me to say he was not a good man; but I could never perceive any scriptural evidence that he was. Harvey, who was mildness itself, considered him as a dishonest man; and others whom I know to be as candid as Harvey, and who never had any controversy with him, as Harvey did, have not scrupled to call him a crafty Jesuit. And how a person who opposed the doctrine of salvation by grace as he did, and who held with sinless perfection in this life, could know either himself or the Saviour, I do not understand." <sup>2</sup> At this point in the Letter there is a reference to a footnote which contrasts Whitefield and Wesley, and adds to the criticisms of the latter. "Whitefield like a servant of the most high God, showed to men the way of

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1. "Free Church Tradition," p. 81
  2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.
  3. Mr. W. = Mr. Wesley

salvation; but his <sup>1</sup> sermons were chiefly made up of stories about himself, and his bro. Charles, and the Methodists!" <sup>2</sup>

It was in a hyper-Calvinist environment that Andrew Fuller was raised. He says: "My father and mother were Dissenters of the Calvinistic persuasion, and were in the habit of hearing Mr. Eve, a Baptist Minister, who being what is here termed high in his sentiments, or tinged with false Calvinism, had little or nothing to say to the unconverted. I therefore never considered myself as any way concerned in what I heard from the pulpit." <sup>3</sup> Again he writes: "The preaching upon which I attended was not adapted to awaken my conscience, as the Minister had seldom anything to say except to believers, and what believing was I neither knew, nor was I greatly concerned to know." <sup>4</sup>

When he was about 14 years of age Fuller found himself facing a question on which he was to write a good deal in later life. "I remember about this time, as I was walking alone, I put the question to myself, What is faith?

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1. That is, Wesley's.
  2. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford. The emphases in the Letter are Fuller's.
  3. Letter to Dr. C. Stuart, Edinburgh, dated 1798, and written from Kettering. Quoted by Ryland, p. 17.
  4. Ibid. Ryland, p. 18.

There is much made of it, What is it? I could not tell, but satisfied myself in thinking it was not of immediate concern, and I should understand it as I grew older." <sup>1</sup>

For some time Andrew Fuller was very uncertain. He was influenced towards Christianity by such books as Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," and by Ralph Erskine's "Gospel Sonnets." Yet he was drawn away from Christianity by the bad company that he kept. Thoughts of the fate of the perishing sinner troubled him very much. He felt like a man drowning, ready to clutch at a straw to save himself, but there seemed no straw to grasp. "In this state of mind," he writes, "I thought of the resolution of Job, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I paused and repeated the words over and over. Each repetition seemed to kindly a ray of hope mixed with a determination, if I might, to cast my perishing soul upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, to be both pardoned and purified; for I felt that I needed the one as much as the other. I was not then aware that any poor sinner had a warrant to believe in Christ for the salvation of his soul, but supposed there must be some kind of qualification to entitle him to do it....However it was, I was determined to cast myself upon Christ, thinking peradventure he would save my soul; and, if not, I could but be lost. In this way I continued above an hour, weeping and supplicating

mercy for the Saviour's sake (my soul hath it still in remembrance and is humbled in me); and as the eye of the mind was more and more fixed upon him, my guilt and fears were gradually and insensibly removed.

"I now found rest for my troubled soul; and I reckon that I should have found it sooner, if I had not entertained the notion of my having no warrant to come to Christ without some previous qualification." <sup>1</sup>

The repeated emphasis in this passage on the idea of requiring a qualification to come to Christ, indicates why Fuller took up the theme so extensively in his writings. He goes on to add that he mentions the matter in this way lest any others be "kept in darkness and despondency by erroneous views of the gospel." <sup>2</sup>

One of Fuller's greatest difficulties later was to make clear the distinction between a warrant to come to Christ because of His mercy, and a qualification to come to Christ, as if His mercy could be demanded as a right. He sees most clearly that to speak of qualifications in coming to Christ is to place the emphasis on man, making salvation of works and not of grace. The other emphasis, on a warrant to come, lays the stress where it ought to be,

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1. Letter to Dr. C. Stuart. Ryland, pp. 28-30

2. Ibid. Ryland, p. 30

on the grace of God in His Son. Man is justified in coming to Christ, not because of what he (man) is, but because of what Christ is, the merciful Saviour.

A similarity between the passage which immediately follows the last quotation from Fuller, and one in "Grace Abounding," seems to have been missed by most writers on Fuller. These are best noticed when the sections are set out in parallel.

Fuller

"I well remember that I felt something attracting in the Saviour. I must - I will - yes, I will trust my soul - my sinful lost soul in his hands. If I perish, I perish. However it was, I was determined to cast myself upon Christ, thinking peradventure he would save my soul; and, if not, I could but be lost." 1

Bunyan

"I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no; if God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfold into eternity, sink or swim, come heaven or hell; Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt catch me do; if not I will venture for Thy Name." 2

In March 1770 Fuller saw, for the first time, the administration of baptism by immersion. "The solemn immersion of a person, on a profession of faith in Christ, carried such a conviction with it that I wept like a child on the occasion." 3 His thoughts thus directed to the

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1. Letter to Dr. C. Stuart. Ryland, p. 29

2. "Grace Abounding," Para. 336

3. Letter to Dr. Stuart, January 1815. Ryland, p. 34

form and to the content of this sacrament led him to the belief that the mode of immersion was the primitive one. He believed also that every Christian ought to submit himself to this rite as part of his obedience to our Lord. He was himself baptized about a month later, and joined the Soham Baptist Church.

Some months of real happiness in the new faith followed. Part of this was derived from the Christian fellowship of the Church as a whole, and part was derived from more personal relations with one of the members, a certain Joseph Diver, who, though many years older than Fuller, had been baptized with him. Joseph Diver had some small influence in guiding the thoughts of his young friend, and some considerable influence in directing his life into the appointed sphere of service.

One morning when going to worship, expecting to hear his friend, Andrew Fuller met one of the members of the Church who told him that "Brother Diver has by accident sprained his ankle, and cannot be at meeting today; and he wishes me to say to you that he hopes the Lord will be with you." <sup>1</sup>

After the first surprise of the suggestion had been overcome, Andrew Fuller agreed to share with the people at the meeting a train of thought that he had followed the day

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xxii

before. Joseph Diver later invited him to speak, but there was a period of hesitation lasting for about a year. Through another absence of Mr. Diver, possibly early in 1773, the responsibility was again placed on young Fuller, and he agreed to bear it. "Being induced to renew the attempt, I spoke from those words of our Lord, 'The Son of Man came to seek and save that which is lost.' On this occasion, I not only felt greater freedom than I had ever found before, but the attention of the people was fixed, and several young persons in the congregation were impressed with the subject and afterwards joined the Church." <sup>1</sup>

The influence of certain earlier events in the little Church at Soham must be traced. A theological controversy arose through a matter which Fuller first raised, and one consequence was the departure of Mr. Eve, the Minister. It seems that Andrew Fuller had observed the excessive drinking of one of the Church members. He went to the man and spoke to him about his behaviour. The man's excuse was, "I cannot keep myself. I am not my own keeper." He had no other answer to give to the earnest exhortations of young Fuller. It seemed to him to be a feeble excuse, and he told the man who was offending "that he could keep himself from such sins as these, and that his way of talking was merely to excuse

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 47-48

what was inexcusable." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller reported the matter to Mr. Eve, the Pastor of the Church, who agreed with him, saying that men were able to keep themselves from open sins, though they had no power to do things spiritually good. As far as outward acts were concerned, man "had power both to obey the will of God and to disobey it." <sup>2</sup>

The Church took up the matter, first as an issue of discipline, and then as a matter of theology. The case of the offender was promptly dealt with, and he was excluded from membership. His excuse was regarded by the Church "as an aggravation of his offence." <sup>3</sup> The theological issue of "the power of sinful men to do the will of God and to keep themselves from sin" <sup>4</sup> caused a serious division in the Church. Fuller was not very closely involved in the theological discussions, for he was only a young man, and was regarded by the members as "a babe in religion." <sup>5</sup> He was, however, greatly exercised in mind and heart by the whole affair. He writes: "I never look back upon these contentions but with strong feelings. They were to me the wormwood and the gall of my youth; my soul hath them still

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xx

2. Ibid. p. xx

3. Ibid. p. xx

4. Ibid. p. xx

5. Ibid. p. xx

in remembrance, and is humbled in me. But though, during these unpleasant disputes, there were many hard thoughts and hard words on almost all hands, yet they were ultimately the means of leading my mind into those views of Divine truth which have since appeared in the principal part of my writings." We underline these significant words. Fuller continues: "They excited me to read, and think, and pray, with more earnestness than I should have done without them; and, if I have judged or written to any advantage since, it was in consequence of what I then learned by bitter experience, and in the midst of many tears and temptations." <sup>1</sup>

We try to follow the course of the controversy. Many members of the Church regarded Mr. Eve's statement as wrong, and a betrayal of the truth. The records of Scripture, they said, prove that the best men in the sacred story never assumed that they had power to keep themselves from evil, but "constantly prayed for keeping grace." <sup>2</sup> Without that keeping grace earth would be filled with wickedness, and men would be devils. The restraint of evil must be ascribed entirely to God, and never to man. Illustrations from the Bible and from the experience of men were adduced to establish the point.

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 42
  2. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xx

Mr. Eve in replying made a distinction between in-  
ternal power and external power. As far as things spirit-  
 ually good were concerned man had no power. Nevertheless  
 a certain external obedience to God could be rendered. He  
 also supported his case with texts, pointing out that the  
 Bible contained many exhortations which assume that we have  
 power to give heed to them. "If we had no power to comply  
 with them," he asked, "why were they given us?" <sup>1</sup>

Though Andrew Fuller had no particular contribution  
 to make in this controversy, he found himself beginning to  
 discern the horns of a dilemma. If man be accountable,  
 some kind of power must belong to him. "If we were like  
 stocks or stones or literally dead, like men in a burying  
 ground, we could with no more propriety than they be com-  
 manded to perform any duty; if we were mere machines, there  
 could be no sin chargeable upon us." <sup>2</sup> On the other hand,  
 the plain affirmation of the Bible is that "the way of man  
 is not in himself." <sup>3</sup> The best of men do not reckon their  
 goodness to be a consequence of their own wisdom and their  
 own effort. They ascribe it to God, "Who worketh in us  
 both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." <sup>4</sup>

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xxi
  2. Ibid. p. xxi
  3. Jeremiah 10, 23
  4. A. G. Fuller, p. xxi; Philippians 2, 13

Joseph Diver also had some consciousness of the dilemma of the situation of sinful man, but he tended to emphasise Divine grace to the exclusion of human responsibility. He suggested that all the precepts of the Bible should be turned into prayers, rather than used as proof texts of human sufficiency. "All our conformity to the Divine precepts is of grace," he told his young friend. "It will never do to argue from our obligations against our dependence, nor from our dependence on grace against our obligations to duty. If it were not for the restraining goodness and preserving grace of God we should be a kind of devils, and earth would resemble hell." <sup>1</sup>

The controversy reached its climax in October 1771 when Mr. Eve severed his connection with the Church, left Scham, and settled at Wisbech.

Andrew Fuller continued to search for some explanation of this dilemma, and in his reading of Dr. Gill found a distinction which he thought was a clue to solving the problem. Dr. Gill made a distinction between "the power of our hand and the power of our heart." <sup>2</sup> A certain physical capacity is given to all men so that they are able to do what is good and to refrain from doing what is evil.

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xxi

2. Ibid. p. xxi

If the physical capacity is not assisted, or rather, motivated by a mind and heart that love goodness, then it is misdirected. "We can do, or forbear to do, this and that, if we have a mind; but many have not a mind, and none would have such a mind but for the restraining goodness or constraining grace of God. We have it in the power of our hands to do good, but we are disposed to do evil, and so to do good is not naturally in the power of our hearts." <sup>1</sup>

This early appreciation of, and emphasis on man's responsibility is of real importance in the development of Fuller's thought, for it leads directly to the duty of all men to believe the Gospel when they hear it. The refusal to believe is a moral decision, and a culpable one. Hence there arises the duty of those to whom the Gospel has been committed of preaching it to all.

Either before or just after Fuller became the Pastor of the Soham Baptist Church, he met Robert Hall, Senior, Minister of the Baptist Church at Arnesby, in Leicestershire. Mr. Hall was certainly present at Fuller's ordination at Soham, and delivered the charge to the new Minister. Along with the other Ministers present he heard some account of the controversy that had troubled the

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1. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xxi

Church. The account given by Fuller was approved. To help him in his thinking about the issues involved, Hall recommended Jonathan Edwards' book "Enquiry into the Freedom of the Will." Fuller, as has been mentioned above,<sup>1</sup> was ignorant of theological literature, and confused this work with a book by Dr. John Edwards of Cambridge, an Episcopalian Calvinist, whose title was "Veritas Redux." Not until 1777, two years later, did he discover his mistake. In those two years his own mind continued to be exercised on the subject.

A stimulus to careful reflection and reading came also from another direction. In 1775 Fuller visited London, and learned of what was called "The Modern Question." It had first been raised in 1735 when Mr. Maurice, Pastor of the Independent Congregation at Rowell, published a pamphlet called "A Modern Question modestly stated." This was answered by Mr. Lewis Wayman of Kimbolton in his work, "Further Inquiry after Truth." In 1739 another pamphlet came from Mr. Maurice, "The Modern Question affirmed and proved." To this Dr. Gill offered an answer in "The Necessity of Good Works unto Salvation considered." Hussey was probably the first to hold the negative side.

Mr. Maurice had been surprised by "the boldness of

the innovation that could call in question the obligations of men to repent and believe the gospel." <sup>1</sup> Fuller realised that others had been puzzled by the hyper-Calvinist attitude. Mr. Maurice's arguments impressed him, and he studied the whole matter more closely. "He set about examining the subject afresh, and the more he read, the greater doubts he entertained of the opinions he had been holding." <sup>2</sup> It should be noticed, in passing, that this careful reading by Fuller was at a time when the writings of Jonathan Edwards were unknown to him.

It would be useful to know how often Robert Hall, Senior, and Andrew Fuller met in the latter's Soham days, for Hall's mind was also grappling with some of the problems that perplexed Fuller. The Soham Church had applied for membership in the Northamptonshire Association on June 8th, 1775, shortly after Fuller's ordination, so there were occasions when the two men might meet. As far as can be judged from the records available, however, it would seem that they did not meet frequently in the period between 1775 and 1782, but that thereafter they had fairly regular contacts.

Andrew Fuller tells in his Diary of visiting Kettering

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1. "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Andrew Fuller," by J. W. Morris, p. 33
  2. Ibid. p. 33



in 1781, and talking to Mr. Hall. "Found much tenderness in telling him my whole affair as it is," he writes.<sup>1</sup> That refers to the problem of whether or not to leave Soham. There are references to visits to Arnesby on April 22nd 1784, July 16th 1784, August 22nd 1785, November 21st 1785. Robert Hall, Senior, and Fuller met at various gatherings on different occasions. For example, they met at a Ministers' Meeting at Kettering on October 5th 1784, and at an Association Meeting at Oakham on May 18th 1785.<sup>2</sup>

If Hall's recommendation of Jonathan Edwards' book were given in 1775, and Fuller did not realise his mistake about the name of Edwards until 1777, it is reasonable to suppose that they never met during the intervening two years. If they had met during that period it is fair to assume that some further conversation on the same topic would have taken place, and the error of the younger man about the book corrected. Further, if they had met much during the years 1780 and 1781, each would have had something to say to the other about the book which he was writing.

In 1779 at the annual Northants Association Meet-

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 79-80
  2. See Ryland, pp. 149, 153, 157, 165, 168, 173, 179

ings, held in Northampton, Robert Hall, Senior, had preached the sermon. This was so well received that the leaders of the Churches desired to have it printed. A little consideration by Hall showed him that a larger treatment of the theme was required, and so a book was prepared which was published in 1781 with the title "Help to Zion's Travellers: being an attempt to remove various stumbling blocks out of the way, relating to doctrinal, experimental, and practical religion." In the last section the author takes up the question of natural ability and moral ability, following the distinction made by Jonathan Edwards. This, of course, is the point that had earlier troubled Andrew Fuller, and which he found expressed in Gill as "the power of the hand," and "the power of the heart."

In 1784 Fuller published his book "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation." It was not his first publication, for earlier that same year he had published a sermon with the title "The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith." The two books of Hall and Fuller are similar in purpose, for they are both attempts by Calvinists to justify an appeal to men to hear the Word and to receive the Word.

The cordial and close relationship of these two men cannot be interpreted as other than a friendship. The older man did not teach the younger, influencing the development of his thought. Fuller had a very high regard for

Hall, and expressed something of it in the funeral sermon he preached at Arnesby in 1791, and in some lines written "To the Memory of my Dear and Venerable Friend, the Rev. Robert Hall." <sup>1</sup> He never acknowledges the older man to be a guide in the development of his thought.

In a footnote in his Treatise defending "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation," Andrew Fuller refers the reader to Hall's "Help to Zion's Travellers." <sup>2</sup>

In trying to trace the development of Andrew Fuller's thought, it is necessary next to consider the influence of Jonathan Edwards. There is no doubt about the considerable influence of Edwards on British theology in the late 18th century. Some of that influence can be traced to George Whitefield who was profoundly influenced by personal contacts with Jonathan Edwards at Northampton, Massachusetts. Dr. E. A. Payne says that Whitefield was not truly launched on his life work until his contact "with a movement in New England which owed its origin to the labours of Jonathan Edwards." <sup>3</sup> He declares that Whitefield probably became a Calvinist through the influence of Jonathan Edwards. <sup>4</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 992-993      2. Page 201  
 3. "The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England,"  
 p. 74  
 4. Ibid. p. 77. See supra p. 37

Most of Edwards' influence was exerted through his books. Among Fuller's companions were many who read and re-read the writings of this New England theologian. In later years there were critics who said that the Northants group preached too much of Jonathan Edwards, and too little of Jesus Christ. In a Letter to Dr. Ryland, written on 28th April 1815, Fuller says, "We have some who have been giving it out that 'if Sutcliff and some others had preached more of Christ and less of Jonathan Edwards, they would have been more useful.' If those who talk thus preached Christ half as much as Jonathan Edwards did, and were half as useful as he was, their usefulness would be double what it is. It is very singular that the Mission to the East should have originated with men of these principles." <sup>1</sup>

It should not be overlooked that in this criticism Andrew Fuller is not specifically named. Only Sutcliff is mentioned by name, as if he were the chief disciple of Jonathan Edwards. Fuller could not easily hear a word in criticism of his friend without jumping to his defence.

What are the facts that can be established about the influence of the writings of Jonathan Edwards on Andrew Fuller? Some of them have been mentioned already, but for the sake of completeness we itemize them here.

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1. Quoted by Dr. Ryland in "Fuller's Memoirs," pp. 545-546

1. Andrew Fuller did not know about Jonathan Edwards until the year 1777. He did not read anything by Edwards until after 1777, for that was the year in which he discovered his error about "Veritas Redux," the book by a Cambridge Calvinist called Dr. Edwards.

2. During the period prior to 1777 Fuller had done quite a lot of reading. In this he was encouraged by Mr. Eve, whom Morris describes as "a retired man and fond of reading," <sup>1</sup> and also by Mr. Joseph Diver, whom Fuller himself said was much given "to reading and reflection." <sup>2</sup> In his first Letter to Dr. Stuart, (1798), Fuller says: "By reading and reflection I was sometimes strongly impressed in a way of conviction." <sup>3</sup> In the controversy at Soham he was driven to serious reflection, and this was done partly by reading, partly by prayer, and partly by thought.

3. After 1777 Andrew Fuller read fairly widely in Jonathan Edwards' books. He admits this on a number of occasions. In his "Remarks on Mr. Martin's Publication entitled 'Thoughts on the Duty of Man relative to Faith in Jesus Christ,'" he deals with the criticism that he had

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1. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 27

2. Letter III to Dr. Stuart, January 1815; Ryland, p. 37

3. Ryland, p. 31

imported "sentiments from America." <sup>1</sup> These are his words: "Much is said of my having read EDWARDS, BELLAMY, and other American writers. Mr. M. seems as if he would have his readers think he has made a great discovery here, though it is no more than I had freely acknowledged. It is true I have received instruction in reading the authors above-mentioned; nor do I know of any sin or shame either in the thing itself, or in openly acknowledging it. Mr. M. may wish to insinuate that I have taken matters upon trust from these writers without examining them; but in answer to such insinuations it is sufficient to say, that is more than he can prove. All he knows or can know of the matter is, that I have read them, and approve of some of their sentiments." <sup>2</sup>

We find a similar admission in the Preface to his first book, "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation." In it Fuller tells how he had come to question some of the sentiments he had learned as a youth, doubting whether they were truly Scriptural. The Missionaries of whom he read, such as Elliott and Brainerd, knew none of his difficulties in preaching to the heathen. "These things led him to the throne of grace, to implore instruction and resolution. He

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 326

2. Ibid. p. 326

saw that he wanted both; the one to know the mind of Christ, and the other to avow it." <sup>1</sup> He acknowledges having read Edwards' "Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will," which Robert Hall, Senior, had encouraged him to read. He tells that he read it with profit. The distinction which he found there between Natural and Moral Inability gave him much satisfaction. "It appeared to him to carry with it its own evidence - to be clearly and fully contained in the Scriptures - and calculated to disburden the Calvinistic system of a number of calumnies with which its enemies have loaded it, as well as to afford clear and honourable conceptions of the Divine government." <sup>2</sup>

A very plain admission of help from the writings of Jonathan Edwards is given by Fuller towards the end of a Letter to Dr. Ryland on "Baxterianism." He joins issue with Baxter on a number of points, mainly relating to the doctrine of Justification. Then he adds: "The greatest, though not the only, instruction that I have received from human writings, on these subjects, has been from President Edwards' 'Discourse on Justification.' That which in me has been called 'a strange or singular notion' of this

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 150

2. Ibid. p. 151

doctrine is stated at large, and I think clearly proved, by him under the third head of that discourse." <sup>1</sup>

4. On various occasions Fuller quotes from or refers to Jonathan Edwards. This is interesting because his contemporary and biographer Morris says that "he could seldom reconcile himself to the drudgery of quotation, even where it might have been to advantage; but used to say, in allusion to the spider, that he liked best to publish what he had spun out of his own bowels." <sup>2</sup> The quotations and references, however, are largely dependent on two books, "On the Will," and "Discourse on Justification." A notable exception is a very lengthy citation from the volume "On the Affections," <sup>3</sup> which is equivalent to about ten pages of this size.

5. Fuller's somewhat limited library contained some of the books of Jonathan Edwards. Morris states quite explicitly that the library was a small one. "His library for several years was not much larger than John Bunyan's, consisting chiefly of a scanty collection of the writings of the Puritans, and those of the New England school..... President Edwards on the Will and also on the Affections, he constantly recommended." <sup>4</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 324

2. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 363

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 274

4. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 359

6. The little group of Northants Baptist Ministers of whom Fuller was a member was greatly stimulated by the writings of Jonathan Edwards. We have already noted the way in which John Sutcliff was stirred to encourage them to more prayer through his reading of Edwards' "Humble Attempt."<sup>1</sup> It is right to add that the influence of Edwards was not the only one at work in Sutcliff's life. K. W. H. Howard has an interesting article about Sutcliff in which he points out the influence of two former Methodists, Dan Taylor and John Fawcett, and also the influence of John Newton, curate at Olney. He suggests that part of the reason for the evangelical Calvinism of Sutcliff was "the wholesome influence of John Newton and his moderate, evangelical Calvinism."<sup>2</sup>

7. There is a specific statement of Andrew Fuller concerning the language of Jonathan Edwards. He tells of reading Edwards "On the Will." "On reading this work... I saw the same things clearly stated in other words, which I had learned by bitter experience."

The customary interpretation of the facts about Fuller and Edwards is one which makes the former a popular-

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1. Supra p. 6

2. Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIV, p. 304 ff.

iser of humanised Calvinism through a dependence on the latter. It is our view that this is not an adequate interpretation of all that is known. The case against the usual interpretation is as follows.

1. Andrew Fuller read other writers than Jonathan Edwards during the critical, formative period prior to 1777. (It is reasonable to include some of the works of John Calvin, for many of them were available in English at the time. <sup>1</sup>)

2. Andrew Fuller did not even know of Jonathan Edwards until 1777, and did not read his works until after that date.

3. There is a contrast implied between Fuller and his Northamptonshire friends in the matter of reading Jonathan Edwards. In the fourth Letter to Dr. Stuart, dated February 1815, he tells of becoming "acquainted with Mr. Sutcliff, who had lately come to Olney; and soon after with Mr. John Ryland, jun., then of Northampton. In them I found familiar and faithful brethren." <sup>2</sup> He goes on to tell how they, through reflection and through their reading of Edwards, Bellamy, Brainerd, and others, had come to doubt the high Calvinism in which they had been raised.

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1. Dr. Horton Davies in his book "The Free Churches," tells how Calvin's Catechism was used in Northampton as early as 1571. *Op. cit.* p. 44. See Appendix D.

2. Quoted by Dr. Ryland, p. 56

He, however, lived many miles away, and did not correspond on the subject, but continued his enquiries on his own. We have already noted that even in the case of John Sutcliff the influence of Jonathan Edwards must not be exaggerated, for there were other forces at work in his mind and heart. <sup>1</sup>

4. We have Andrew Fuller's own statement about the influences in his life during the formative period. <sup>2</sup> He was led to "those views of Divine truth which have since appeared in the principal part" of his writings by the Soham experiences, beginning with his conversion, and continuing with the theological controversy on the power of sinful man. Full weight must be given to this statement of Fuller. It is clear from it that Jonathan Edwards and his writings played no part in determining his theology. They could not, for the young Fuller did not know of the man or of his work. His experiences in Soham, as he says, excited him "to read, and think, and pray with more earnestness than I should have done without them; and, if I have judged or written to any advantage since, it was in consequence of what I then learned by bitter experience." <sup>3</sup>

5. The closeness of Fuller's thought and language to that of John Calvin suggest that the influence of the

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1. See supra p. 60

2. Quoted supra p. 46

3. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 42

latter is much greater than is commonly supposed. The evidence for this is given in detail in the pages that follow.

The case against the customary interpretation of the relation between Fuller and Jonathan Edwards is therefore strong, both on its negative side, in denying the influence of the American, and also on its positive side, in pointing to another influence, one that might have been expected.

In conclusion, we may say that Andrew Fuller uses some of the language of Jonathan Edwards in order to express concepts already familiar to him, (e.g. Moral Inability), which he had learned in part from other Calvinist sources,<sup>1</sup> such as the writings of John Calvin, and in part from his own discernment of the subject through attention to the great themes of revelation as they are presented in the Bible.

Some of Fuller's contemporaries were ready to attribute his system of religious thought to Richard Baxter. The charge cannot be substantiated by the evidence. Morris says that Fuller did not see "the polemical writings of Baxter till after he had published what others call his

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1. Dr. Horton Davies points out the influence of the Genevan Bible in transmitting Calvinism. "The Free Churches," p. 18

Baxterianism." <sup>1</sup> When he read Baxter for himself because he was charged with plagiarism, he said in a letter, "I have lately been reading the controversial pieces of Baxter, and found them tedious and crabbed in the extreme. It is true they contain some of my sentiments, but much that I disapprove." <sup>2</sup>

Fuller wrote a letter on "Baxterianism" for his friend Dr. Ryland. In it he says: "I have been constrained to do what I never did before, look over such polemical pieces of that writer as I could procure. I have found this, I confess, an irksome task." <sup>3</sup> He proceeds thereafter to criticize Baxter on a number of points, quite clearly proving his independence.

Andrew Fuller claimed that his doctrine was genuine Calvinism, and he did not object to being called a Calvinist. In writing about the use of the terms Arminian and Calvinist he says: "When I have used the former of these terms, I am not unconscious of ever having used it as 'a term of reproach.' As to calling Philanthropos, or any other person, an Arminian, I never desire to affix to an honest man a name by which he would not call himself. For

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1. "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 363

2. Ibid. p. 363

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 324

my own part, though I never mean to set up any man as a standard of faith, and though in some things I think differently from Calvin, yet as I agree with him in the main, particularly in the leading sentiments advanced in the former treatise, and as it served to avoid unnecessary circumlocution, I have used the term Calvinist, and have no objection to being so called by others." <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ryland, in his biography of Fuller, reports a conversation with a certain clergyman. Asked about the different shades of Calvinism Fuller said: "There are three which we commonly describe, namely, the high, the moderate, and the strict Calvinists. The first are, if I may so speak, more Calvinistic than Calvin himself; in other words bordering on Antinomianism." The second group, or moderates, he goes on to describe as "half Arminian, or, as they are called with us, Baxterians." The third class are those who really hold the system of Calvin. "I do not believe every thing that Calvin taught, nor any thing because he taught it; but I reckon strict Calvinism to be my own system." <sup>2</sup>

How far that claim is true is the subject of the detailed investigation that follows.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 210

2. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 566-567

SECTION II Theological.

When Andrew Fuller was inducted as the Minister of the Baptist Church at Kettering on October 7th, 1783, he offered to the assembled congregation a "narration of his exercises of mind and his Confession of Faith." <sup>1</sup> Such Confessions were apparently regularly given by newly appointed Ministers. Robert Robinson of Cambridge offered his Confession of Faith to the Baptist Church there when he settled in 1761. <sup>2</sup> Fuller, in declaring his Faith in this way was desirous of making plain his own theological position, particularly in the matter of calls to the unconverted.

This Confession of Faith must be examined closely, and compared with the account of the Christian Faith which is given by John Calvin. We begin with this Confession as a convenient and succinct account of Fuller's "leading principles," as he would call them. We shall draw upon his many theological writings in making the comparison, but it is useful to start here.

Before proceeding to the detailed study of the

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 97
  2. "With Freedom Fired," by G. W. Hughes, p. 17

contents of this Confession, it is worth considering, (and quoting), in full. Certain general observations can then be made about it.

The special emphases, indicated by underlining, are Fuller's.

"I. When I consider the heavens and the earth, with their vast variety, it gives me to believe the existence of a God of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, that made and upholds them all. Had there been no written revelation of God given to us, I should have been without excuse if I had denied or refused to glorify him as God.

"II. Yet considering the present state of mankind, I believe we needed a revelation of the mind of God to inform us more fully of his and our own character, of his designs towards us, and will concerning us; and such a revelation I believe the scripture of the Old and New Testament to be, without excepting any one of its books, and a perfect rule of faith and practice. When I acknowledge it as a perfect rule of faith and practice, I mean to disclaim all other rules as binding on the conscience, and as well to acknowledge that if I err either in faith or practice from this rule, it will be my crime; for I have ever considered all deviations from divine rules to be criminal.

"III. In this divine volume I learn many things concerning God which I could not have learned from the works of nature, and the same things in a more convincing light. Here I learn especially the infinitely amiable moral character of God. His holiness, justice, truth, and goodness are here exhibited in such a light by his holy law and glorious gospel as is nowhere else to be seen!

"Here also I learn that though God is One yet he is also Three - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The idea which I think the scriptures give us of each of the Sacred Three, is that of PERSON.

"I believe the Son of God to be truly and properly God, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

"Everything I see in this sacred mystery appears to me above reason, but nothing contrary to it.

"IV. I believe, from the same authority, that God created man in the image of his own glorious moral character, a proper subject of his moral government, with dispositions exactly suited to the law he was under, and capacity equally to obey it to the utmost, against all temptations to the contrary. I believe if Adam, or any holy being, had had the making of a law for himself, he would have made just such an one as God's law is; for it would be the greatest of hardships to a holy being not to

be allowed to love God with all his heart.

"V. I believe the conduct of man in breaking the law of God was most unreasonable and wicked in itself, as well as fatal in its consequences to the transgressors; and that sin is of such a nature that it deserves all that wrath and misery with which it is threatened in this world and in that which is to come.

"VI. I believe the first sin of Adam was not merely personal, but that he stood as our representative; so that when he fell we fell in him, and became liable to condemnation and death, and what is more, are all born into the world with a vile propensity to sin against God.

"I own there are some things in these subjects which appear to me profound and awful; but seeing God has so plainly revealed it in his word, especially in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, I dare not but bow my shallow conceptions to the unerring testimony of God, not doubting but that he will clear his own character sufficiently at the last. At the same time, I know of no other system that represents this subject in a more rational light.

"VII. I believe that men are now born and grow up with a vile propensity to moral evil, and that herein lies their inability to keep God's law, and as such it is a moral and a criminal inability. Were they but of a right

disposition of mind there is nothing now in the law of God but what they could perform; but being wholly under the dominion of sin they have no heart remaining for God, but are full of wicked aversion to him. Their very mind and conscience are defiled. Their ideas of the excellence of good and of the evil of sin are, as it were, obliterated.

"These are subjects which seem to me of very great importance. I conceive that the whole Arminian, Socinian, and Antinomian systems, so far as I understand them, rest upon the supposition of these principles being false. So that if it should be found at last that God is an infinitely excellent being, worthy of being loved with all that love that his law requires; that as such, his law is entirely fair and equitable, and that for God to have required less would have been denying himself to be what he is; and if it should appear at last that man is utterly lost, and lies absolutely at the discretion of God; - then the whole of these systems I think it is easy to prove must fall to the ground. If men on account of sin lie at the discretion of God, the equity and even necessity of predestination cannot be denied; and so the Arminian system falls. If the law of God is right and good, and arises from the very nature of God, Antinomianism cannot stand. And if we are such great sinners, we need a great Saviour, infinitely greater than the Socinian Saviour!

"VIII. From what has been said, it must be supposed I believe the doctrine of eternal personal election and predestination. However, I believe that though in the choice of the elect God had no motive out of himself, yet it was not so in respect to punishing the rest. What has been usually but perhaps improperly called the doctrine of reprobation, I consider as nothing more than the divine determination to punish sin in certain cases in the person of the sinner.

"IX. I believe that the fall of man did not at all disconcert the Great Eternal; but that he had from eternity formed a people upon the supposition of that event, (as well knowing that it would be), and that in this everlasting covenant, as it is called, the Sacred Three, speaking after the manner of men, stipulated with each other for the bringing about their vast and glorious design.

"X. The breaking up of this glorious plan to view, I believe, has been a gradual work from the beginning. First it was hinted to our first parents, in the promise of the woman's seed - then by the institution of sacrifices, by types, prophecies, and promises, it was carried on through the Mosaic dispensation - at length the Son of God appeared - took our nature, obeyed the law, and endured the curse, and hereby made full and proper atonement for the sins of his own elect - rose again from the dead -

commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach his gospel - and then triumphantly ascended above all heavens, where he sitteth at the right hand of God, interceding for his people, and governing the world in subserviency to their welfare, till he shall come a second time to judge the world.

"I cannot reflect upon this glorious procedure, with its all-glorious Author, without emotions of wonder and gratitude. As a workman he might be truly said to have His work before him! At once he glorified the injured character of God, and confounded the devil, destroyed sin, and saved the sinner!

"XI. I believe that such is the excellence of this way of salvation, that every one who hears or has opportunity to hear it proclaimed in the gospel is bound to repent of his sin, believe, approve, and embrace it with all his heart; to consider himself, as he really is, a vile lost sinner; to reject all pretensions to life in any other way; and to cast himself upon Christ, that he may be saved in this way of God's devising. This I think to be true faith, which whoever have, I believe will certainly be saved.

"XII. But though the way of salvation is in itself so glorious that a man must be an enemy to God, to mankind, and to himself not to approve it; yet I believe

the pride, ignorance, enmity, and love to sin in men, is such, that they will not come unto Christ for life; but in spite of all the calls or threatenings of God will go on till they sink into eternal perdition. Hence I believe arises the necessity of an almighty work of God the Spirit, to new model the soul; to form in us new principles or dispositions, or, as the scriptures call it, giving us a new heart and a new spirit. I think, had we not first degenerated we had stood in no need of being regenerated, but as we are by nature, we must be born again. The influence of the Spirit of God in this work, I believe to be always effectual.

"XIII. I believe the change that takes place in a person at the time of his believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, is not only real, but relative. Before our believing in Christ we are considered and treated by God as a lawgiver, as under condemnation, but having fled to him for refuge, the law, as to its condemning power, hath no more dominion over us, but we are treated even by God the Judge as in a state of justification. The subject matter of justification, I believe to be nothing of our own moral excellence; but the righteousness of Christ alone, imputed to us, and received by faith.

"Also I believe, that before we believe in Christ, notwithstanding the secret purpose of God in our favour,

we are considered by the moral Governor of the world, as aliens, as children of wrath even as others; but that on our believing in his Son, we are considered as no more strangers and foreigners, but are admitted into his family, and have power or privilege to become the sons of God!

"XIV. I believe all those who are effectually called of God never fall away so as to perish everlastingly; but persevere in holiness till they arrive at endless happiness.

"XV. I believe it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it; and as I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind, and that it is their duty to love the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in him for salvation though they do not; I therefore believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them to be not only consistent, but directly adapted, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls.

"XVI. I believe the ordinances which Christ, as King of Zion, has instituted for his church throughout the gospel-day, are especially two; namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. I believe the subjects of both to be

those who profess repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and on such I consider them as incumbent duties. I believe it essential to Christian Baptism that it be by immersion, or burying the person in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I likewise believe Baptism as administered according to the primitive plan, to be pre-requisite to church communion; hence I judge, what is commonly called Strict Communion, to be consistent with the word of God.

"XVII. Although I disclaim personal holiness as having any share in our justification, I consider it as absolutely necessary to salvation; for without it no man shall see the Lord.

"XVIII. I believe the soul of man is created immortal; and that when the body dies, the soul returns to God who gave it, and there receives an immediate sentence, either to a state of happiness or misery, there to remain till the resurrection of the dead.

"XIX. As I said that the breaking up of God's plan has been gradual from the beginning, so I believe this gradation will yet be beautifully and eternally carried on. I firmly and joyfully believe that the kingdom of Christ will yet be gloriously extended, by the pouring out of God's Spirit upon the ministry of the

word: and I consider it as an event, for the arrival of which it becomes all God's servants and churches most ardently to pray! It is one of the chief springs of my joy in this day of small things, that it will not be so always.

"XX. Finally, I believe that Christ will come a second time, not as before, to save the world, but to judge the world; and that in the presence of an assembled universe every son and daughter of Adam shall appear at God's tremendous bar, and give account of the things done in the body; that sinners, especially those who have rejected Christ, (God's way of salvation), will be convicted, confounded, and righteously condemned! - These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous, who through grace have embraced Christ and followed him whithersoever he went, shall follow him there likewise, and enter with him into the eternal joy of their Lord. This solemn event I own on some accounts strikes me with trembling; yet on others I cannot look upon it but with a mixture of joy, when I consider it as the period when God will be vindicated from all the hard thoughts and speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him; when all wrongs shall be righted, truth brought to light, and justice done, where none here could be obtained; when the whole empire of sin, misery, and death, shall

sink like a millstone in the sea of eternal oblivion, and never arise more; when God's whole plan shall be exposed to the view of admiring millions; - when, I say, I consider it in this view, I cannot but look upon it as an object of joy, and wish my time may be spent in this world in looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God." <sup>1</sup>

This Confession of Faith, whose doctrines will be illustrated from the works of Fuller as we proceed, is quite plainly a Calvinist statement, using the adjective in its broader sense. One or two sections, (XI and XV for example), contain emphases peculiar to the 18th century situation in which Fuller lived.

It is interesting to compare the order of the paragraphs in this Confession with the order which John Calvin adopts in his Institutes. The progression of the theme in the Institutes is roughly the same as that in Fuller, as the following detailed analysis shows.

<u>Fuller's Confession.</u>	<u>Calvin's Institutes.</u>
I	I, 5
II	I, 6
III	I, 13; II, 6
IV	I, 15

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, pp. 99 - 109

Fuller's Confession.Calvin's Institutes.

V	II, 1
VI	II, 1
VII	II, 1
VIII	III, 21
IX	-
X	II, 6-12, 16
XI	II, 6; III, 2
XII	III, 1, 24
XIII	-
XIV	II, 5; III, 24
XV	III, 23, 24
XVI	IV, 14-17
XVII	III, 22
XVIII	III, 25
XIX	-
XX	III, 25

We know that Calvin followed the order of the Apostle's Creed in his exposition of the Christian Faith in the Institutes. The questions may therefore be asked: was Fuller influenced in adopting his order because he too was following the Apostle's Creed? Was Fuller dependent, directly or indirectly on Calvin? We can give a fairly certain answer to the first question. It is most unlikely that he followed the Apostle's Creed. Though he writes very wisely about

"Creeds and Subscriptions," allowing them a subordinate place in the Church by way of interpretation,<sup>1</sup> he shares the prejudices of his own denomination against all Creeds. He writes in the same article, "The word of God, and that alone ought to be the ground of both faith and practice."<sup>2</sup>

The second question is more difficult. It is not clear whether Fuller followed Calvin's order because of a direct dependence on him, through his own reading of the Institutes, or whether he followed the Genevan Reformer indirectly, that is, because of the progression of thought which had become familiar through other Calvinist writers and preachers, and various Confessions, such as the Westminster. Probably there is something of unconscious dependence, a copying of the usually accepted order, and something of conscious independence, a setting out of the Faith in a way found to be the most logical and the most lucid.

We find various references to Calvin in the writings of Fuller, but few direct quotations. Fuller's knowledge of Calvin's writings, however, is more extensive than the few quotations would suggest. There is a revealing sentence in a Letter to John Sutcliff, written on 18th February

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 830

2. Ibid. p. 830

1801 from Kettering. In it he recommends various books for Bro. Ward of Keysoe, and among those which he includes are "any of Calvin's works if cheap, especially his Commentaries." <sup>1</sup> This emphasis on Calvin's Commentaries may explain a fact which will become plainer as we proceed, namely the strange resemblance in certain places between the words of Fuller and those of Calvin.

In his "Letter on Calvinism," Fuller refers to Booth's knowledge of Calvin and of Calvinists of the 16th century, but suggests that his own reading of such writers does not support the conclusions of Booth. "It does not appear to me that his opinions on either of the subjects in question are those of Calvin or of Calvinists during the 16th century. I do not pretend to have read so much of either as he has; but from what I have seen, so it appears to me." <sup>2</sup>

We find in Fuller's works five citations from the Institutes, one of them being given twice, on pages 310 and 320. The quotations are taken from Norton's translation, with one or two minor verbal differences in some

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1. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford. Also included among the suggestions are Fuller's three favourite works of Jonathan Edwards, "On the Will," "On the Affections," and his Sermons on Justification.

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 323

cases. The passages referred to are:

page 173	Institutes III, 2, xxxiii
page 310	III, 11, xxiii
page 310) page 320)	II, 16, x and xi (certain minor verbal differences in each quotation)
page 319	III, 11, xxiii (Clearly echoed on page 890)

In addition there are six specific references to the Institutes to be found in Fuller's article on "Calvinists" in Hannah Adams composite volume, "Views of Religion."

The passages are: <sup>1</sup>

III, 22, x  
 II, 5, iv  
 III, 24, xiv  
 II, 1, viii  
 III, 24  
 II, 5, iii and iv

There is also a passing reference to another part of the Institutes, to II, 8, in a Postscript to "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems Examined." <sup>2</sup> Two footnotes draw attention to the Institutes, both of them to the same passage, III, 11, vii.

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1. Hannah Adams' "Views of Religion," pages 68-69

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 108

Six other brief references to Calvin and quotations from his works have been noted. On page 251, in expounding the Biblical meaning of *περιποίησις* Calvin's remarks on it are quoted in Latin. On page 278, in Letter VII of the series "Strictures on Sandemanianism," Calvin's Commentary on John 1, 11-13 is quoted. The Commentary on the Fourth Gospel is quoted in two other places. In his Letter "On Calvinism," Fuller cites some of the Genevan Reformer's comments on John 3, 16. A letter "On the Love of God, and whether it extends to the non-elect," given on pages 973 - 974 of Fuller's works, has part of this same quotation once again. In the "Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount," (pages 483 - 497), Calvin's Commentary on Matthew <sup>1</sup> is referred to on page 494, and a short quotation is used. On page 841, in a brief Essay entitled "On the Presence of Judas at the Lord's Supper," Calvin's "opinion that Judas was present" is acknowledged, and a quotation from the Commentary on John is given.

Fuller seems to have been familiar with some of John Calvin's Sermons, for in his "Remarks on Two Sermons by W. W. Horne of Yarmouth," he says: "In calling the doctrine defended by Mr. H. false Calvinism I have not miscalled it. In proof of this, I appeal to the writings of that

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1. Commentary on the Harmony of the Gospels.

great reformer, and of the ablest defenders of his system in later times - of all indeed who have been called Calvinists till within a hundred years. Were you to read many of Calvin's sermons, without knowing who was the author... you would be led...to pronounce him an Arminian." <sup>1</sup>

A further reference to Calvin may possibly lie behind some words in Discourse IV of the Commentary on Genesis. <sup>2</sup> In the concluding paragraph Fuller deals with the efforts of Adam and Eve "to hide their outward nakedness," and says "they betake themselves to the leaves of the garden." Then he continues: "This, as a great writer observes, was 'to cover, not to cure.'" Who is this "great writer?" Is it John Calvin? The words "to cover, not to cure" are not identical with anything in Calvin's Commentary on Genesis, but the idea is definitely present.

On numerous occasions Fuller defends Calvin against the 18th century critics. There is a very fair defence of the Genevan Reformer in a treatment of the inevitable criticism associated with the case of Servetus. In the VIIIth Letter of his series on "The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared as to their Moral Tend-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 889

2. Ibid. p. 352

ency," Fuller writes: "We are often reminded of the persecuting of Trinitarians, and particularly of Calvin towards Servetus....It ought...to be acknowledged...that persecution for religious principles was not at that time peculiar to any party of Christians, but common to all, whenever they were invested with civil power. It was an error, and a detestable one, but it was the error of the age." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller's general Defence of Calvin and of Calvinism is not of the first importance for us. Our concern is to discover how far his theology may be said to be truly Calvinist, as he claims it to be. To do this in detail we begin with the Confession by analysing the themes in it. These themes, their language and their meaning as they are found in Fuller's writings, can thus be compared with what John Calvin has to say on the same subjects.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 75. With this attitude may be compared that of Robert Robinson of Cambridge. He asks the question: "What makes Baptists so fond of the name and creed of Calvin, seeing the barbarian burnt Servetus and denounced the vengeance of God and the civil magistrates against all Anabaptists?" In his book on Robinson, ("With Freedom Fired," p. 103), G. W. Hughes says: "Nothing shocked him more than that Baptists should 'sing psalms round the tomb of that bloody Calvin....I cannot forgive the rascal for this barbarous deed.'" Robinson moved towards Unitarianism at the end of his life, which may explain this outburst.

The Confession may be conveniently divided into ten doctrines which can usefully be set out as follows:

1. God	I, II, III
2. Revelation	I, II, III
3. The Bible	II, III
4. Man	IV, V, VI, VII, XI, XII, XIII, XV
5. Election	VIII
6. Covenant	IX, X
7. Perseverance	XIV, XVII
8. The Sacraments	XVI
9. Eternal Life	XVIII
10. Second Coming	XIX, XX

We shall consider each of these ten themes in succession, and as far as possible independently, though it will be apparent from the beginning that the doctrines inevitably shade off into one another.



that the truth of a First Cause and Creator of all things is "never introduced....in the form of an abstract proposition." <sup>1</sup> Fuller declares that the doubters of God's existence need "reproof rather than information." <sup>2</sup>

He makes this point a number of times. In the Letter IV of "Letters on Systematic Divinity," which is entitled "On the Being of God," he writes: "To undertake to prove his existence seems to be almost as unnecessary as to go about to prove our own....he that calls it in question is not so much to be reasoned with as to be re-proved. His error belongs to the heart rather than to the understanding. His doubts are either affected, or arise from a wish to free himself from the idea of accountability." <sup>3</sup> Fuller continues in words that repeat the thought of the first article of his Confession. "The things that are seen in the visible creation contain so clear a manifestation of the things that are not seen, even of his eternal power and Godhead, as to leave atheists and idolaters 'without excuse.'" <sup>4</sup>

In the same Letter Fuller wonders "whether the argumentation in favour of the existence of God has not

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 869

2. Ibid. p. 869

3. Ibid. p. 744

4. Ibid. p. 744

made more sceptics than believers." <sup>1</sup> Again, in the Commentary on Genesis, we find him saying that the existence of God is a truth "taken for granted" in the narrative of the creation. He believes that the apparent omission has a purpose, namely to teach men that denial of God's existence deserves rebuke rather than reasoning. <sup>2</sup>

In Letter V of his Systematic Divinity Fuller says; "The evidence which is afforded of the being and perfections of God by the creation which surrounds us and of which we ourselves are a part is no more superseded by revelation than the law is rendered void by faith." <sup>3</sup> The extension of the idea in the Confession to include man himself as well as the external world is essentially the attitude of John Calvin. Dr. Dowey says: "Man himself, including his inner mental life, his subjectivity, is a part of creation. Calvin's conception of the revelation in creation corresponds to the doubleness, the subjectivity and objectivity." <sup>4</sup>

In all this it is implied that there is no knowledge of God apart from God. It is always very difficult to preserve a careful distinction between (1) man as a creature

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 744

2. Ibid. p. 348

3. Ibid. p. 745

4. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, Jr.

who owes his total existence every moment to God; (in uno Deo subsistentiam); <sup>1</sup> (ii) man as a sinner who is alienated from God; and (iii) man looking upon himself and reflecting on his nature, and so seeming to reason his way to God without God. Fuller is less consistent than Calvin in preserving these distinctions, though his theology does, in the main, take them into account. For example, he can write: "It is the name of God that gives authority, importance, and glory to every person or thing with which it stands connected. The glory of man, above the rest of the creatures consisted in this: 'God created man in his own image.'" <sup>2</sup>

The point is more clearly made in a Letter of 1784 to a Brother Minister. <sup>3</sup> Fuller is discussing the nature of man and whether "Adam had eternal life dwelling in his soul as a natural principle," as his correspondent suggested was his belief. Fuller will have none of this. Eternal life is dependent on the continuing influence of the Holy Spirit. "Though I believe that grace in the saints is glory begun, and, as it were, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life - yet I do not think this is owing

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1. Institutes I, 1, 1

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 744

3. The Letter is in the John Rylands' Library, Manchester

to the nature of the principle, but to the continual influence of God's Holy Spirit. I suppose if God were this moment to leave me utterly as to his gracious influence, the nature of my principle of love to him is not such as would keep alive, but I should utterly apostatize."

It is convenient, and appropriate, at this point to notice an interesting parallel between the writings of Fuller and Calvin. When preaching to the students of Bristol Baptist College on one occasion, Fuller said: "The light of nature itself teaches some truth - such as the being of God...." <sup>1</sup> In the Institutes, (I, 3, 1), the Genevan Reformer wrote: "That there exists in the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct (naturali instinctu), some sense of Deity, we hold to be beyond dispute since God himself, to prevent any man from pretending ignorance, has endued all men with some idea of his Godhead, the memory of which he constantly renews and enlarges, that all to a man, being aware that there is a God, and that he is their Maker, may be condemned by their own conscience when they neither worship him nor consecrate their lives to his service."

As has been stated above, a knowledge of God apart from God is not implied in the phrases "light of nature,"

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 696

2. Beveridge's translation

(Fuller), and "natural instinct," (Calvin). The capacity thus spoken of is a derived capacity, owing its existence to the beneficent purposes of the Creator.

There is a remarkable parallel to the expression of Fuller's faith in his Confession to be found in Calvin's Commentary on the first verse of Psalm 19. John Calvin writes: "When a man, from beholding and contemplating the heavens, has been brought to acknowledge God, he will learn also to reflect upon and to admire his wisdom and power as displayed on the face of the earth, not only in general, but even in the minutest plants. In the first verse, the Psalmist repeats one thing twice, according to his usual manner. He introduces the heavens as witnesses and preachers of the glory of God, attributing to the dumb creature a quality which, strictly speaking, does not belong to it, in order the more severely to upbraid men for their ingratitude, if they should pass over so clear a testimony with unheeding ears...."

"When we behold the heavens, we cannot but be elevated, by the contemplation of them, to Him Who is their great Creator; and the beautiful arrangement and wonderful variety which distinguish the courses and station of the heavenly bodies, together with the beauty and splendour which are manifest in them, cannot but furnish us with an evident proof of his providence. Scripture, indeed, makes

known to us the time and manner of the creation; but the heavens themselves, although God should say nothing on the subject, proclaim loudly and distinctly enough that they have been fashioned by his hands: and this of itself abundantly suffices to bear testimony to men of his glory. As soon as we acknowledge God to be the supreme Architect, who has erected the beauteous fabric of the universe our minds must necessarily be ravished with wonder at his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power." <sup>1</sup>

The similarity between the thought and language of Calvin and that of Fuller is further apparent in Calvin's comments on the second verse of the same Psalm 19. He writes: "Although God should not speak a single word to men, yet the orderly and useful succession of days and nights eloquently proclaims the glory of God, and that there is now left to men no pretext for ignorance." <sup>2</sup>

The closeness of thought and of language is quite singular. Almost every phrase of the first article of the Confession of the 18th century Baptist can be paralleled in the 16th century Reformer. A comparison of the clauses in parallel columns sets out this similarity in a striking way.

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1. Calvin, Commentary on the Psalms, Vol. I, pp. 308-309

2. Ibid. p. 311

Fuller

"When I consider the heavens and the earth."

"with their vast variety."

"it gives me to believe the existence of God."

"infinite wisdom, power and goodness."

"that made and upholds them all."

"Had there been no written revelation of God given to us."

"I should have been without excuse."

Calvin

"When a man...beholding and contemplating the heavens."

"wonderful variety."

"brought to acknowledge God."

"infinite goodness, wisdom and power."

"evident proof of his providence."

"fashioned by his hands."

"Scripture, indeed makes known to us the time and manner of the creation; but the heavens themselves, although God should say nothing, proclaim loudly and distinctly...."

"Although God should not speak a single word to men yet...."

"...ingratitude if they should pass over so clear a testimony with unheeding ears."

"...there is now left to men no pretext for ignorance."

It is clear from these comparisons that Fuller has made strict Calvinism his own system.

2. The nature of God. The nature of this God of whose existence he is certain Fuller touches on briefly

in Section I of his Confession, and more fully in Section III. God is "infinite wisdom, power, and goodness," he declares, and uses a phrase that is Calvinist through and through. Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter in "The Teaching of Calvin," says: "God's perfect goodness, directed by unerring wisdom, carrying out its purposes with omnipotent power, was a postulate of all his (Calvin's) thinking." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin groups these attributes frequently in his Institutes in Book I, chapters 1, 2, and 5. For example, in I, 1, i, he writes: "in Domino sitam esse veram sapientiae lucem, solidam virtutem, bonorum omnium perfectam affluentiam." In I, 2, i, the three words potentia, providentia, and bonitas are linked together. Norton translates them as "infinite power," "wisdom," and "goodness." Book I, 5, iii has the combination potentia, bonitas, sapientia, which Norton renders as "power," "goodness," and "wisdom." In the Argument preceding the Commentary on Genesis, Calvin refers to "His power, His wisdom, His goodness." <sup>2</sup>

Two further quotations, from Fuller, may suffice on this point, but before giving them there is a small yet significant matter of language that should be noted. Fuller rarely, if ever, directly refers to Divine "attributes."

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1. A. Mitchell Hunter, "The Teaching of Calvin," p. 49

2. Commentary in loco p. 63

He uses instead the term "perfections." <sup>1</sup> His Letter VIII in Systematic Divinity, which deals with the Divine properties, is called "On the Perfections of God." This language certainly derives from Calvin, for it is in marked contrast to the common "Calvinist" usage in the 17th and 18th centuries. <sup>2</sup>

The two quotations are these: In the first chapter of "The Gospel its own Witness," Fuller begins with these words. "There are certain perfections which all who acknowledge a God agree in attributing to him; such are those of wisdom, power, immutability, etc...Wisdom and power, in the Supreme Being, render him a proper object of admiration; but justice, veracity, and goodness attract our love." <sup>3</sup> In a sermon entitled "Churches walking in the truth the joy of Ministers," delivered on the occasion of an ordination, Fuller says, "Divine truth includes the existence of God, as a Being of infinite excellence and glory, 'holy, just and good.'" <sup>4</sup>

The phrase describing God as "infinitely amiable" is one that Fuller likes. In his comparison of the Cal-

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1. Pages 6, 296, 745, 749

2. The writer is indebted to the Rev. Prof. T.F. Torrance for drawing his attention to this interesting and important point.

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 6

4. Ibid. p. 702

vinist and Socinian Systems he writes: "Those who embrace the Calvinistic system believe that man was originally created holy and happy; that of his own accord he departed from God, and became vile; that God, being in himself infinitely amiable, deserves to be, and is, the moral centre of the intelligent system." <sup>1</sup> Again, in his Letter "On the Being of God" Fuller uses the words "infinitely happy God." <sup>2</sup>

We do not need to depend on occasional references to the doctrine of the Trinity to discover Fuller's beliefs. It is comparatively simple to compare the thoughts of Fuller on this doctrine with those of Calvin, for both wrote quite specifically on the subject. The eleventh of Fuller's "Letters in Systematic Divinity" <sup>3</sup> is "On the Trinity - or on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit being one God." A miscellaneous Essay is entitled "Thoughts on the Doctrine of the Trinity." <sup>4</sup> There are also various references to this doctrine in replies to the Rev. Henry Davies on the Deity of Christ. <sup>5</sup> Calvin offers his statement of this doctrine in the First Book of the Institutes, in the 13th chapter.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 54

2. Ibid. p. 745

3. Ibid. pp. 750-752

4. Ibid. pp. 944-945

5. Ibid. pp. 940-941

The substantial agreement of the two men on the doctrine of the Godhead will be apparent from a brief exposition of their views.

Fuller insists on the necessity of a humble approach to the subject. It is not a topic for speculation, but one of greater importance than is often recognised because of its relation to the Person and work of Christ, and because it is the foundation on which the Church is built. In the Essay "On the Manner in which Divine Truth is communicated in the Holy Scriptures," he says: "The doctrine of the Trinity is never proposed to us as an object of speculation, but as a truth affecting our dearest interests. John introduces the Sacred Three as witnesses to the truth of the gospel of Christ, as objects of instituted worship, into whose name we are baptized; and Paul exhibits them as the source of all spiritual good: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.'" <sup>1</sup>

This doctrine is pure revelation. In his Essay "Thoughts on the Doctrine of the Trinity," Andrew Fuller writes: "The doctrine of a Trinity in unity is evidently a doctrine of pure revelation, and could never have been discovered by the mere light of nature." <sup>2</sup> Belief in this

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 869

2. Ibid. p. 945

doctrine is required even though there may not be full understanding of it. A lack of full understanding of it does not necessarily involve any contradiction. A challenge is offered to Dr. Priestley on this point, for he, as a Socinian, had objected to the doctrine as incomprehensible. Dr. Priestley had written in his "Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever," that the Apostles did not teach "mysterious doctrines, or doctrines in their own nature incomprehensible."<sup>1</sup> Andrew Fuller points out the distinction (which is in Section III of his Confession), between "things which are above reason and things contrary to it," and applies it to this account of the Godhead.

The doctrine is less explicit in the Old Testament than in the New, but Old Testament evidence can be cited. For example, the plural name of God, and the appearing of the angel of the Lord to men and receiving Divine worship. In his Commentary on Genesis Fuller quotes Chapter 1, verse 26, as part of the evidence for a Trinitarian belief. "The writer makes use of the plural term Elohim, which yet is joined to singular verbs. This has been generally thought to intimate the doctrine of a plurality in the unity of the Godhead....Nor can I, on any other supposition, affix a consistent meaning to such language as that which after-

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1. Quoted by Fuller, "Works," p. 945

wards occurs, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" <sup>1</sup>

Calvin, on the other hand, refuses to allow any significance to the plural term Elohim as indicative of the Trinity, <sup>2</sup> but nevertheless says about the 26th verse of that same 1st Chapter, and its words "Let us make man," that "Christians properly contend, from this testimony, that there exists a plurality of Persons in the Godhead." <sup>3</sup>

The New Testament teaching on the doctrine of the Trinity is, according to Fuller, quite explicit, and he quotes numerous passages. It is of some interest to discover that the textually difficult passage about the three witnesses, I John 5, 7, receives some careful consideration. One might have expected, remembering Fuller's usual uncritical attitude to the Bible, a ready acceptance of this passage. All the passages that may be cited supremely emphasise the character of Christ as the Son of God, though in a lesser way they stress the Divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit.

Fuller has little or nothing to say about the ancient arguments concerning the terms *οὐσία*, *ὑποστάσις*, *πρόσωπον*, subsistentia, persona. He writes: "It is generally sup-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 348

2. Calvin's "Commentary on Genesis," Vol. I, p. 71

3. Ibid. p. 92

posed that the term person approaches the nearest to the Scriptural idea of any term that could be applied." <sup>1</sup>

"There are in the Divine unity three subsistencies, and as the New Testament constantly represents each of these three as bearing personal names, sustaining personal offices, and performing personal acts, we think ourselves warranted in accounting them three Divine persons." <sup>2</sup>

It is of interest to find that Fuller knew the Athanasian Creed and its classic statement of this doctrine of the Trinity. In dealing with the objections and difficulties of the Rev. Henry Davis he makes this quite clear. Mr. Davis was dissatisfied with the traditional Trinitarian account of the Deity of Christ, and wanted to substitute a scheme of indwelling in its place. Fuller says that when he was writing his original piece expounding the Deity of Christ as essential to Atonement, he had no thoughts of what Athanasius had written. Yet it was clear to Fuller that Mr. Davis had paid too little attention to understanding what the Athanasian Creed said. He had asked how he was to conceive of Christ's proper Deity. "Am I to consider the Deity of Christ as separate and distinct from the Deity of the Father and the Holy Spirit? Is there one Deity of the Son, another of the

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 944

2. Ibid. p. 945

Father, and another of the Spirit?" <sup>1</sup> Andrew Fuller points out that Mr. Davis has given too little thought to the Athanasian Creed which says: "There is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one." <sup>2</sup> Further on in the same reply Fuller quotes the Athanasian Creed again. There is no division in Deity as if there were three Gods. It seems to him that "the doctrine abundantly taught in the Scriptures" <sup>3</sup> is that "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, yet that there are not three Gods, but one God."

Calvin deals more fully with the subject of the Trinity, and in the Institutes enters into a discussion of the difficult terms that must be used. He proceeds from that point to establish the doctrine in the same way as Fuller, by references to the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments. A few quotations from the Genevan Reformer help to make plain his teaching.

"While he (God) proclaims his unity, he distinctly sets it before us as existing in three persons." <sup>4</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 940
  2. The emphasis is Fuller's.
  3. Fuller's "Works," p. 941
  4. Institutes I, 13, ii

"If credit is given to the Apostle's testimony it follows that there are three persons ( hypostases ) in God." <sup>1</sup>

"Though heretics may snarl and the excessively fastidious carp at the word Person as inadmissible, in consequence of its human origin, since they cannot displace us from our position that three are named, each of whom is perfect God, and yet that there is no plurality of gods, it is most uncandid to attack the terms which do nothing more than explain what the Scriptures declare and sanction." <sup>2</sup>

"By person I mean a subsistence in the Divine essence, - a subsistence which, while related to the other two, is distinguished from them by incommunicable properties." <sup>3</sup>

Fuller has some words very similar to this last quotation from Calvin. In writing on the Being of God he asks the question: "What shall I say of the Trinity?" and goes on to define this, "or the subsistence of distinct persons in the same individual essence...." <sup>4</sup>

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1. Institutes I, 13, ii

2. I, 13, iii

3. I, 13, vi

4. Fuller's "Works," p. 744

Calvin quotes numerous passages from the Old Testament and from the New Testament to establish the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. He (and Fuller) make much use of the baptismal formula of Matthew 28, 19. He says: "There cannot be a doubt that our Saviour wished to testify, by a solemn rehearsal, that the perfect light of faith is now exhibited when he said, 'Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'" <sup>1</sup>

In the Letter on Systematic Divinity Fuller says: "In the New Testament the doctrine is more explicitly revealed; particularly in Christ's commission to his apostles to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." <sup>2</sup> In his "Thoughts on the Doctrine of the Trinity," the first passage which he cites as he begins to quote "passages very full to this purpose," <sup>3</sup>(that is, proving the doctrine), is Matthew 28, 19. In his piece "On the Sonship of Christ," Fuller says: "The ordinance of baptism is commended to be administered 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'" <sup>4</sup> He uses this passage to prove the Divine nature of the Son.

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1. Institutes I, 13, xvi

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 751

3. Ibid. p. 945

4. Ibid. p. 944

John Calvin hesitates to use any "analogies from human affairs to express the solemn nature of this distinction" <sup>1</sup> of persons in the Godhead. Fuller says: "It is highly probable that there is nothing in creation perfectly analogous to the mode of the Divine subsistence, and therefore nothing by which it can be fully conceived." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Institutes I, 13, xviii

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 944

## 2. Revelation

For the purposes of completeness a distinction has been made between the second subject, "Revelation," and the third, "The Bible." It is not a distinction that is a hard and fast one, for neither Calvin nor Fuller thinks of revelation in an abstract way. The revelation is of the Living God, and His activities and His purposes are supremely revealed in the Bible, the record of His dealings with men. Nevertheless, some attempt to maintain the distinction is useful. It is a distinction with a difference, but what is said generally of revelation will apply to revelation in its particular context of the Bible.

We can follow some of the thought of Fuller on this matter in the fourth and fifth "Letters on Systematic Divinity." Their respective titles are "On the Being of God," and "On the Necessity of a Divine Revelation." In the main he tries to reserve the word "revelation" for the unfolding of the Divine nature in the Bible, but he does not deny that there is some knowledge of God apart from this special act of gracious revealing of which the Bible tells. "God manifested himself in creation, in giving laws to his creatures, in the providential government of the world and in other ways; but all these exhibited him

only in part: it is in the gospel of salvation, through his dear Son, that his whole character appears." <sup>1</sup> Again, he writes: "The word of God is not to be exalted at the expense of his works. The evidence which is afforded of the being and perfections of God by the creation which surrounds us, and of which we ourselves are a part, is no more superseded by revelation than the law is rendered void by faith." <sup>2</sup> Later on, however, Fuller can use the word "revelation" of the way in which the heathen have come to know God. "If all the evidence which the heathen have of the being and perfections of God consist of traditional accounts, derived originally from revelation...." <sup>3</sup>

It is clear in the subsequent part of the same letter that Fuller thinks of the Divine glory as revealed in the works of His hands, but he tries to reserve the term "revelation" for the manifestation in Christ, and for the human acknowledgment of the grace so manifested. He speaks of "objective light" in the Divine works, but "a state of mind" unable to receive it. <sup>4</sup> His precise words are: "Whether the heathen in any instance....actually perceived the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator, merely from the works of his hands....I shall not under-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 745

2. Ibid. p. 745

3. Ibid. p. 745

4. Ibid. p. 745

take to answer....It is sufficient for my argument that it has not been for want of objective light, but of a state of mind to receive it." <sup>1</sup> Yet he goes on to plead the "necessity of Divine revelation to a competent knowledge of God and of his will concerning us." <sup>2</sup>

This point Fuller tries to establish, first by reviewing "the insufficiency of human reason to obtain from the mere light of nature a competent knowledge of God, and of his will concerning us." <sup>3</sup> The argument proceeds as follows. Man in the state of innocence was able to reach a true knowledge of God in Whose image he was created, though in this state of innocence "man was governed by a revealed law." <sup>4</sup> He was not left to reason his way to God on his own, thus finding out the character and will of God. Reason was "under the influence of rectitude," <sup>5</sup> and thus he was brought both to understand the mind of God and to love Him and to obey Him. After the Fall the imago was spoiled, ("effaced" is Fuller's word), and therefore man needs a revelation. "The light of nature" is "sufficient to bear witness for God, and so to leave sinners without excuse," yet in innocence that "light of nature" was not man reaching after God without the revel-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 745

2. Ibid. p. 745

3. Ibid. p. 745

4. Ibid. p. 745

5. Ibid. p. 745

ation of God. "If revelation was necessary in innocence, much more now man's foolish heart is darkened by sin." <sup>1</sup>

The second argument for "the necessity of Divine revelation" depends on "its relation to faith." Without revelation faith would be impossible, and so would salvation. But revelation and faith vary in degree. "At divers times and in divers manners," says the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "In obscure intimations, in types and shadows, in promises and in prophecies," says Andrew Fuller, adding that faith must keep "pace with it." <sup>2</sup> "Revelation, like the shining light, shone 'more and more unto the perfect day,' and such was the 'path of the just' which corresponded with it." <sup>3</sup> The Letter is concluded by Fuller emphasising the freedom of God in His work of revelation. We may not know the means whereby "the Holy Spirit may impart it." <sup>4</sup> Many wonderful things may be effected in an extraordinary way, as did happen when the Magi were led to the manger at Bethlehem.

Some of these points are made by Fuller in an earlier work, his "Gospel its own Witness," published in 1799. In answering his opponents' emphasis on "the law and light of nature" he declares that he does not wish to deny the

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 746

2. Ibid. p. 746

3. Ibid. p. 746

4. Ibid. p. 746

light of nature or disparage its significance. It has its place in the totality of "the Divine government."<sup>1</sup> This "light of nature" is not self-generated, but depends ultimately on revelation, "being derived from revelation," as Fuller says.<sup>2</sup> He goes on to define more particularly the phrase "the light of nature," saying that he does not mean "those ideas which heathens have actually entertained, many of which have been darkness, but those which were presented to them by the works of creation."<sup>3</sup> The light thus given is not enough. Revelation is still necessary. "It is one thing for nature to afford so much light in matters of right and wrong, as to leave the sinner without excuse; and another to afford him any well-grounded hope of forgiveness....It is one thing to leave sinners without excuse in sin, and another thing to recover them from it."<sup>4</sup>

We turn from what Fuller says on this subject to consider what John Calvin has to say about it. A beginning can be made in the second chapter of the first book of the Institutes. Calvin starts by defining the knowledge of God in terms of interest in the purposes of God, and immediately goes on to make a distinction between the

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 10

2. Ibid. p. 10

3. Ibid. p. 10

4. Ibid. p. 10

knowledge of their Maker which sinful men have, and that which sinful men have of Christ the Redeemer. "A twofold knowledge of him arises." <sup>1</sup> "It is one thing to perceive that God our Maker supports us by his power, rules us by his providence, fosters us by his goodness, and visits us with all kinds of blessings, and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ." <sup>2</sup> Calvin follows this distinction in his Institutes, for Book I is entitled "Of the Knowledge of God the Creator," and Book II is called "Of the Knowledge of God the Redeemer."

There is a phrase in this section which strongly resembles Fuller's "light of nature." Calvin writes of "that simple and primitive knowledge, to which the mere course of nature <sup>3</sup> would have conducted us, had Adam stood upright." <sup>4</sup> Elsewhere we find the same thought, for in his Commentary on John we discover these words of Calvin: "Natural reason never will direct men to Christ, and as to their being endued with prudence for regulating their lives or born to cultivate the liberal arts and sciences, all this passes away without yielding any advantage." <sup>5</sup>

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1. I, 2, 1

2. I, 2, 1

3. genuinus naturae ordo

4. I, 2, 1

5. Op. cit. p. 34

All knowledge of God is conditioned by the activity of God, that is, by revelation. "Not a particle of light, or wisdom, or justice, or power, or rectitude, or genuine truth, will anywhere be found which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause." <sup>1</sup> Hence it is possible to admit a knowledge of God through His works. The contrast between God's works and God's Word, already noted in Fuller, is to be found frequently in Calvin. In his Commentary on Psalm 19 he commences his exposition of the first verse by saying that it consists of two parts, in the first of which the glory of God as manifested in His works is celebrated. In the second the knowledge of God in His Word is exalted and magnified. <sup>2</sup>

The same thought is taken up again in the commentary on verse 7. The created world does offer some instruction to man, giving him knowledge of the existence of God, but to the Jews He "had communicated a fuller knowledge of himself by means of his word." <sup>3</sup> The "splendid representation of the glory of God" profits nothing "without the aid of the word." <sup>4</sup>

Calvin can speak of the created world as the garment of the Living God. In the Commentary on Psalm 104 we read:

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1. I, 2, i

2. Op. cit. p. 308

3. Op. cit. p. 317

4. Op. cit. p. 317

"In comparing the light with which he represents God as arrayed to a garment, he intimates, that although God is invisible, yet his glory is conspicuous enough. In respect of his essence, God undoubtedly dwells in light that is inaccessible; but as he irradiates the whole world by his splendour, this is the garment in which he who is hidden in himself, appears in a manner visible to us.... Those who seek to see him in his naked majesty are certainly very foolish. That we may enjoy the sight of him, he must come forth to view with his clothing; that is to say, we must cast our eyes upon the very beautiful fabric of the world in which he wishes to be seen by us, and not be too curious and rash in reaching into his secret essence. Now, since God presents himself to us clothed with light, those who are seeking pretexts for their living without the knowledge of him, cannot allege in excuse of their slothfulness, that he is hidden in profound darkness. When it is said that the heavens are a curtain, it is not meant that under them God hides himself, but that by them his majesty and glory are displayed; being, as it were his royal pavilion." <sup>1</sup>

Occasionally Calvin uses the word "revelation" in the restricted sense of the unfolding of God's nature as

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1. Op. cit. p. 145

Redeemer in Jesus Christ. In the Commentary on Psalm 19 he writes: "In consequence of the corruption of our nature, the true light of truth is not to be found among men where revelation is not enjoyed."<sup>1</sup> Again, in the Sermon on I Timothy 3, 16, he says: "There is nothing but death and condemnation in us until we know that God came down to seek and save us."<sup>2</sup> Revelation is thus closely associated with the message of the Bible, a point which Fuller frequently stresses, and which will be further illustrated in the following chapter on the Bible.

Man must never begin to delude himself into thinking that the light of God which shines in the natural world is adequate for his salvation, says Calvin. The light of the Word must be added to the light of the world.<sup>3</sup> Or, changing the metaphor, he says: "In order truly to know God, and praise him as is his due, we need another voice than that which is heard in thunders, showers, and storms in the air, in the mountains and in the forests; for if he teach us not in plain words, and also kindly allure us to himself, by giving us a taste of his fatherly love, we

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1. Op. cit. p. 319

2. "The Mystery of Godliness," (and other Sermons) p. 15, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1950

3. Commentary on Psalm 19, p. 317

will continue dumb." <sup>1</sup>

The revelation of God in nature bears testimony to God, and leaves sinners without excuse. Indeed it "avails only to take away excuse." <sup>2</sup> The word "inexcusable" is found twice within a few lines in the exposition of Psalm 19, 7. "The creatures....serve as instructors to all mankind, and teach all men so clearly that there is a God, as to render them inexcusable." <sup>3</sup> "While the heavens bear witness concerning God, their testimony does not lead men so far as that thereby they learn truly to fear him, and acquire a well-grounded knowledge of him; it serves only to render them inexcusable." <sup>4</sup>

The "objective light" is great, but man's "state of mind" is dull and stupid and perverse. It is this perversity that is the real hindrance in acquiring a saving knowledge of God. "Man's intelligence is altogether useless towards guiding his life aright. Perverseness more clearly appears in his heart." <sup>5</sup> The consequences of the Fall are a total vitiation of the soul, "from reason even to the affections." <sup>6</sup> All man's mental

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1. Commentary on Psalm 29, 9; p. 482

2. Commentary on Romans, p. 71

3. Op. cit. p. 317

4. Op. cit. p. 317

5. Commentary on Ezekiel, p. 376

6. Ibid. p. 375

processes are "alienated from God." <sup>1</sup> E. A. Dowey emphasises that Calvin "never forgets for a moment that sin has blinded man to the revelation in creation, but since sin does it, the revelation itself is not harmed. Man's receiving apparatus functions wrongly." <sup>2</sup>

Corresponding to "revelation" on the Divine side is "faith" on the human side. A variety of figures of speech can be employed to describe this. R. S. Wallace gathers several of them together when he writes: "Faith is openness to revelation. It is the power to recognise the glory of God hidden in this act of His grace, and to receive the gift offered through it. It is the ability to hear the Word of God coming through the word of man.... Revelation involves the giving of an inward illumination, of ears to hear and eyes to see, and a mind to understand, and of a willingness to obey what is understood. It involves the re-shaping, and opening out of the mind and will of man in conformity to the Word of God." <sup>3</sup> He goes on further to illustrate this by a series of short sections on "Faith as response to the Word of God;" "Faith as response to the promises of the Word;" and

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1. Commentary on Colossians, p. 158
  2. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," p. 73
  3. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," by R. S. Wallace, pp. 123 - 124

"Faith as a gift of the Holy Spirit." <sup>1</sup>

Whatever terms may be used to describe faith, that which is apprehended in faith is always Christ. The form of the revelation may be natural phenomena, priestly and sacrificial ritual, ceremonies of cleansing and purification, promises and prophecies, as in the Old Testament dispensation, but the content is always the same: it is Christ. Christ is the sole source of light, and that light shines over all the ages, before His time on earth as well as after. If there is an earlier yearning for the shining light which shines "more and more unto the perfect day," <sup>2</sup> that day of light is Christ's day. "His bodily presence was the true and remarkable day of the world, the lustre of which was diffused over all ages. For whence did the holy fathers in ancient times, or whence do we now, desire light and day, but because the manifestation of Christ has always darted its rays to a great distance, so as to form one continued day?" <sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless there are certain differences between the old and the new administration of the one covenant between God and man, and corresponding to these are

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1. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," by R. S. Wallace, pp. 124 - 128
  2. Proverbs 4, 18
  3. Commentary on St. John's Gospel, p. 369

differences in faith. "Faith has its degrees in beholding Christ." <sup>1</sup> Revelation and faith may be said to vary in degree with one another.

It is clear from these summaries that Fuller's exposition of revelation is very near to that of Calvin, and is certainly entitled to be described as genuinely Calvinist. A brief recapitulation of the leading ideas of each man, set out in parallel columns, makes the similarity even more obvious.

Fuller

The term "revelation" is used with the general meaning of all knowledge of God, even among those who may be called heathen, and also the particular meaning of the "competent knowledge of God" in Christ. <sup>2</sup>

"God manifested himself in creation, in

Calvin

The term "revelation" is used with a general meaning.

"Not a particle of light, or wisdom, or justice, or power, or rectitude, or genuine truth, will anywhere be found which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause." <sup>3</sup>

The term "revelation" is used with a particular meaning.

"The true light of truth is not to be found among men where revelation is not enjoyed." <sup>4</sup>

"It is one thing to perceive that God our

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1. Commentary on St. John's Gospel, p. 360
  2. Fuller's "Works," p. 745
  3. Institutes I, 2, 1
  4. Commentary on Psalm 19, 7; p. 319

Fuller

giving laws to his creatures, in the providential government of the world and in other ways; but all these exhibited him only in part; it is in the gospel of salvation, through his dear Son, that his whole character appears." 1

"The word of God is not to be exalted at the expense of his works." 3

"...the insufficiency of human reason to obtain from the mere light of nature a competent knowledge of God and of his will concerning us." 5

"Be thankful for the light of revelation. Regard not the ignis fatuus which wanders

Calvin

Maker supports us by his power, rules us by his providence, fosters us by his goodness, and visits us with all kinds of blessings, and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ." 2

"This psalm consists of two parts, in the first of which David celebrates the glory of God as manifested in his works; and, in the other, exalts and magnifies the knowledge of God which shines forth more clearly in his word." 4

"Natural reason never will direct men to Christ." 6

"Man's intelligence is altogether useless towards guiding his life aright." 7

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 745
  2. Institutes I, 2, i
  3. Fuller's "Works," p. 745
  4. Commentary on Psalm 19, 1; p. 308
  5. Fuller's "Works," p. 745
  6. Commentary on St. John's Gospel, p. 34
  7. Commentary on Ezekiel, p. 376

Fuller

about under the name of reason in modern productions." 1

"It is one thing for nature to afford so much light in matters of right and wrong, as to leave the sinner without excuse...." 2

Revelation and faith correspond with one another and vary in degree. 4

Calvin

"While the heavens bear witness concerning God, their testimony does not lead men so far as that thereby they learn truly to fear him, and acquire a well-grounded knowledge of him; it serves only to render them inexcusable." 3

"Faith has its degrees in beholding Christ." 5

Before passing to the next section some reference may be made to the phrase with which Fuller concludes Section III of his Confession. He writes saying that everything in this sacred mystery is above reason, not contrary to it. This may refer either to the sacred mystery of the Trinity, or to the sacred mystery of revelation. It is not necessary to establish which is the precise meaning, whether it be the particular or the general. We have noticed that the particular meaning is

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 758
  2. Ibid. p. 10
  3. Commentary on Psalm 19, 7; p. 317
  4. See Fuller's "Works," p. 746
  5. Commentary on St. John's Gospel, p. 360

used elsewhere. <sup>1</sup> The contrast between man's thoughts and God's thoughts is exhibited on numerous occasions in both the Genevan Reformer and the Kettering Baptist, for it is a fundamental one in their theological writing, and, indeed, in all theological writing.

Fuller defines his meaning of "reason" carefully on several occasions. In a sermon to the Northamptonshire Association, preached at Nottingham on June 2nd 1784, he says: "We do not suppose faith and right reason to be opposites.....On the contrary, nothing is more evident than that Christianity is entirely a rational system.... But though nothing in revelation be contrary to right reason, yet there are many things which our reason could never have found out, had they not been made known by the Supreme Intelligence.....Not only was our reason incapable of finding out many truths before they were revealed; but even now they are revealed, they contain things above our comprehension. It is one thing to say that Scripture is contrary to right reason, and another thing to say that it may exhibit truths too great for our reason to grasp." <sup>2</sup>

At this point in the published sermon there is a footnote containing some further explanatory remarks. Fuller suggests that a great deal of the difficulty that

1. See supra p. 98

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 541

has arisen in discussing "faith" and "reason" has come from the fact that the term "reason" has been used without defining it. "The word reason, like the word understanding, has two senses. 1. It signifies the fitness of things. So the apostles used it, when they said, 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables;' that is, it is not fit and proper. 2. It signifies our power or capacity of reasoning. So it is said of Nebuchadnezzar that his reason returned to him; that is, his power or capacity of reasoning. Now it is easy to see that these are two essentially different ideas: the one is perfect and immutable, remaining always the same; the other is shattered and broken by sin, and liable to a thousand variations through blindness and prejudice. No Divine truth can disagree with the former; but it may be both above and contrary to the latter." <sup>1</sup>

This distinction is made in another sermon, preached in 1796 before the Baptist Association at St. Alban's. He distinguishes between "reason" and "reasoning," saying that "nothing which God reveals can contradict the former, but this is more than can be said of the latter." <sup>2</sup> Further on in the same sermon Fuller writes: "The truths contained in the oracles of God may be distinguished into two

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 541      2. Ibid. p. 557

kinds: those which approve themselves to our ideas of wisdom or fitness; and those which utterly surpass our understanding, but which require to be believed as matters of pure revelation." <sup>1</sup>

The sovereign operations of the Spirit of God are described by Fuller as according to reason, a Divine reason. "It is allowed that the Holy Spirit, in all his gifts and operations, acts in a way of sovereignty, since we have no claim upon him for any thing which he bestows; but it does not belong to the idea of sovereignty that there be no reason for it or wisdom in it. The Holy Spirit divideth to every age and every man severally as he will, but he always willeth what is wise and good, or what is best upon the whole. The sovereignty of creatures may degenerate into caprice; but this cannot be supposed of God." <sup>2</sup>

The distinction is found in a number of places in the writings of Calvin. The following quotations, from the Institutes, and from the Commentary on the Psalms, will suffice.

"The excellence of the divine wisdom is manifested in....conducting all things in perfect accordance with reason." <sup>3</sup> This is "reason" used in Fuller's first

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 558

2. Ibid. p. 722

3. Institutes I, 5, viii

sense of "fitness."

"The testimony of the Spirit is superior to reason." <sup>1</sup>  
Here "reason" means "reasoning," the capacity to reason.

"When unable clearly to ascertain the reason, let us not decline to be somewhat in ignorance in regard to the depths of the divine wisdom." <sup>2</sup>

"Truly does Augustine maintain that it is perverse to measure the divine by the standard of human justice." <sup>3</sup>

"It is said that God has made all things in wisdom. This commendation is set in opposition to the unhallowed imaginations, which often creep upon us when we are unable to discover the designs of God in his works, as if indeed he were subject to folly like ourselves, so as to be forced to bear the reprehension of those who are blind in the consideration of his works." <sup>4</sup>

"As it is an imagination more than irrational to suppose, that a fabric so elegant, and of such surpassing embellishment, was put together by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, the prophet bids us attend more carefully to the wisdom of God." <sup>5</sup>

The point need not be laboured further. The

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1. Institutes I, 7, iv

2. III, 24, xiv

3. III, 24, xvii

4. Commentary on Psalm 104, 24; p. 164

5. Ibid. p. 164

general agreement of the two men, Calvin and Fuller, is sufficiently established. Andrew Fuller is a genuine Calvinist in his beliefs about Revelation.

### 3. The Bible.

Fuller's beliefs about the Bible, which are given briefly in the early Confession are more fully expressed in some of his later writings. Two of the "Letters on Systematic Divinity" which Dr. Ryland asked him to write during the early part of 1814 deal with "The Necessity of a Divine Revelation," and "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures." <sup>1</sup>

In the first of these, as has been noted above, <sup>2</sup> he emphasises that there is a knowledge of God in His works, and that it is not necessary to exalt His Word "at the expense of his works." <sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, there is a real inadequacy and insufficiency in "human reason to obtain from the mere light of nature a competent knowledge of God, and of his will concerning us." <sup>4</sup> "The light of nature, though sufficient to bear witness to God, and so to leave sinners without excuse, was never designed in any state to furnish man with all he needed." <sup>5</sup> "Divine revelation is necessary to a competent knowledge of God, and of his will concerning us." <sup>6</sup> That revelation is in the Bible.

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 745 - 748

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 745

5. Ibid. p. 745

2. Supra p. 106

4. Ibid. p. 745

6. Ibid. p. 745

When he turns to "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures," Andrew Fuller says he intends to "offer evidence of the Bible being written by the inspiration of God." <sup>1</sup> He suggests that those who wrote the books "profess to have been Divinely inspired." <sup>2</sup> The question remains, however, whether what was plain to them is still plain to us who live in a different age and place, and whether the assurance is adequate for unhesitating trust. Five points are offered in support of an affirmative answer. They are "The truth of the things contained in the sacred writings, their consistency, their perfection, their pungency, and their utility." <sup>3</sup>

The Bible is the sole standard of truth for man, according to Andrew Fuller. In vindicating the Baptist Missionary Society and its methods he writes: "If we wish to convert them (that is, the Indians), to Christ, we shall put the Scriptures into their hands, as the only standard of truth, and teach them to consider all other writings as in nowise binding on their consciences, nor even as claiming regard any further than they agree with them." <sup>4</sup>

"Learn your religion from the Bible," he declares

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 746

2. Ibid. p. 746

3. Ibid. p. 747

4. Ibid. p. 824

in a sermon preached at a Minister's Induction to a pastorate. "Let that be your decisive rule. Adopt not a body of sentiments, or even a single sentiment, solely on the authority of any man - however great, however respected. Dare to think for yourself. Human compositions are fallible. But the Scriptures were written by men who wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Human writings on religion resemble preaching - they are useful so far as they illustrate the Scriptures, and induce us to search them for ourselves." <sup>1</sup>

There is every reason for believing that Fuller regarded the Bible not only as the infallible authority, but as a book totally and verbally inspired. His use of the Scriptures in his own private life, as well as in his public controversies, points to that conclusion. In the Induction Sermon which is quoted above, he draws a contrast between "human compositions" which are "fallible," and the compositions of the Biblical writers which are "inspired by the Holy Spirit." He makes a distinction between the Biblical writings and the non-Biblical writings of the Apostles, etc. In an article "On Instrumental Music in Christian Worship," he comments: "We

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 682

have no proof....that even the apostles were under the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their sermons... though they were in those which have place in the Holy Scriptures." <sup>1</sup> In the second Letter in the series on Systematic Theology Fuller pens these words: "The message of the prophets being dictated by the Holy Spirit...." <sup>2</sup>

Some of the chapter headings in Part II of "The Gospel its own Witness," are further evidence of the place of the Bible in Andrew Fuller's thinking. These are: "I. The Harmony of Scripture with historic Fact evinced by the Fulfilment of Prophecy." "II. The Harmony of Scripture with Truth evinced from its Agreement with the Dictates of an enlightened Conscience, and the Result of the closest Observation." "III. The Harmony of Scripture with its own Professions argued from the Spirit and Style in which it is written." "V. The Consistency of the Scripture Doctrine of Redemption with the modern Opinion of the Magnitude of Creation." <sup>3</sup>

In a Sermon entitled "The Nature and Importance of a Deep and Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth," based on Hebrews 5, 12-14, Fuller takes up the phrase in the text, "the oracles of God," and applies it directly to the

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 859

2. Ibid. p. 742

3. Ibid. pp. 28 - 45

Bible. He says: "All Divine knowledge is to be derived from the oracles of God. It is a proper term by which the sacred Scriptures are here denominated, strongly expressive of their Divine inspiration and infallibility: in them God speaks; and to them it becomes us to hearken.... The knowledge of God itself must here be sought, for here only it can be found." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller is nevertheless aware of the processes by which the Bible has come to this land, and realises the possibility of imperfections creeping in through wrong translations. In a brief piece called "Remarks on the English Translation of the Bible," Fuller writes:

"Allowing all due honour to the English translation of the Bible, it must be granted to be a human performance, and, as such, subject to imperfection. Where any passage appears to be mistranslated, it is doubtless proper for those who are well acquainted with the original languages to point it out, and to offer, according to the best of their judgment, the true meaning of the Holy Spirit." <sup>2</sup>

He goes on to say that honest criticisms should be encouraged, but he is aware of dishonest ones. In his work on "Socinianism and Calvinism" he stresses this.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 557

2. Ibid. p. 990

He declares that the Socinians "mangled and altered the translations to their own minds." <sup>1</sup> He continues:

"But though it be admitted that every translation must needs have its imperfections, and that those imperfections ought to be corrected by fair and impartial criticism, yet, where alterations are made by those who have an end to answer by them, they ought always to be suspected, and will be so by thinking and impartial people." <sup>2</sup>

It is only right to add that the infallible and authoritative Bible is not treated in any literalist way. Indeed, it is necessary to say that there is a measure of inconsistency in Fuller's writing of this subject. It is not easy to speak about the letter and the spirit of a passage if there is a belief that the Spirit dictated the words, that is, the letter. Fuller can write about God dictating the words of the Bible, but he can also compare and contrast the literal meaning of a passage with a larger intention conveyed through these particular words.

One can see an example of this departure from literalism in the "Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount." Fuller suggests that some have interpreted our Lord's words on oaths as a prohibition of them in any form.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 93

2. Ibid. p. 93

That, of course, is what must be done if the words are to be taken seriously as words dictated by God. The question whether this is the right interpretation is determined "by recourse to the principles laid down at the outset of the sermon."<sup>1</sup> In other words, the spirit of the whole must be understood, and that spirit is not to be identified with the words.

Again, when Fuller is discussing the meaning of "resisting evil," and how one must take the words of our Lord about "turning the other cheek," and giving our cloak to the man who would sue at law and take away our coat, he says on two occasions that it is the principle which is involved that matters, not the act.<sup>2</sup> When he turns to consider such practices of religion as the giving of alms and prayer, he points out that the hypocritical behaviour of those who make a public fuss about these is condemned in principle or in motive, not in act. "It is not so much the act as the principle, or motive, that our Lord condemns."<sup>3</sup> Fuller continues the argument by showing that it is not a literal understanding of the words that is required. Later on in the same section he writes: "The words of our Lord, however, must not be lit-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 487      2. Ibid. p. 488

3. Ibid. p. 489 (The emphases are Fuller's)

erally applied to all cases. Respect is had more to the principle of the act than to the act itself." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller returns to this theme in an Essay on the "Principles of Church Discipline," when he seeks to enquire into "the spirit, reason or design of various precepts." <sup>2</sup> He goes on to assert that "there are various aspects in our Lord's sermon on the mount, which I am persuaded were never designed to be taken literally." <sup>3</sup> He then proceeds to enumerate several of these, such as the ones already discussed.

Certain difficulties in the Bible were recognised and admitted by Fuller. In the first of his series of "Expositions of Passages Apparently Contradictory," he writes: "Admitting the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, their harmony ought not to be called in question; yet it must be allowed by every considerate reader that there are apparent difficulties. Nor is it unlawful, but laudable, to wish to see those difficulties removed, and to aim at a perception of the particular beauty of God's word, as well as a general persuasion of its harmony." <sup>4</sup>

We have already mentioned in passing that Fuller

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 490

2. Ibid. p. 833

3. Ibid. p. 833

4. Ibid. p. 529

was aware of certain textual questions connected with I John 5, verse 7. He devotes a long section of Letter IX of the series on Systematic Theology to discussing the passage, and in the end decides that it ought to be left in as authoritative Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

Fuller writes briefly about the doctrines believed by the Society of Friends, and touches in particular on the different conceptions of the rule of faith. In discussing the Quaker belief in the Inner Light he writes: "It is with pleasure we find the early Friends acknowledging the Scriptures to have been written by Divine inspiration, and to be the words of God; and also that 'Whatever doctrine or practice, though under pretensions to the immediate dictates and teachings of the Spirit, is contrary to them, ought to be rejected as false and erroneous.' But we do not perceive the consistency between this and their denying them to be the principal rule of faith and manners; that is the principal rule by which the other is to be judged of. Ought we to try the truth of the Scriptures, then, by their agreement with what we suppose to be the dictates and teachings of the Spirit within us, or the truth of these supposed dictates and teachings by their agreement with the Scrip-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 751

tures? The above concession appears to be in favour of the latter, and so to decide the question.

"We readily admit that the Spirit of God is greater than the Scriptures....The one was a revelation of new truths to the mind; the other enables us to discern the glory of that which is already revealed." <sup>1</sup>

On various occasions Andrew Fuller has much to say about a distinction between positive and moral obligation. Positive obligations, according to him, are those which are right because they are commanded; moral obligations are those which are commanded because they are right. We need not linger to discuss the validity of such a distinction, but we can see that when it is applied in dealing with the Bible, it gives great opportunities for endless argument. It provides a way of escape for the literalist who is at times embarrassed by his creed.

For example, the Sandemanians practised foot washing, and exchanging the kiss of greeting, and said that they were permanent obligations on all Christians. No, said Fuller. These are not positive obligations, but the appropriate first century understanding of the moral obligation to love one another.

There are two variants of a story concerning a

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 967 - 968

projected visit of A. M'Lean to Kettering which touch on this belief of the Scot in the permanence of the obligation of foot washing. In the first <sup>1</sup> Fuller is said to have told M'Lean that if it would please him when he called at Kettering, he (Fuller) would gladly wash the other's feet, and also the feet of any other poor Christian brother for whom it would be a useful service of love! In the other version of the story <sup>2</sup> Fuller is supposed to have said to M'Lean that he (Fuller) did not believe in the necessity of foot washing, but he promised to clean his boots and bring him a dry pair of slippers if he called on him!

The distinction between positive and moral obligations is particularly pressed by Fuller when dealing with the sacraments. The commands to baptize and to gather at the Lord's Table are in the Bible, and must be accepted because they are there.

This distinction enables Fuller to maintain a twofold attitude to the Bible. It is a positive and authoritative word most of the time, but occasionally the spirit or principle or motive behind the words must

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1. The first version is in "Discipline of the English and Scottish Baptist Churches," which consists of extracts from two letters to Mr. M'Lean in 1796.
  2. The second version is in a footnote on page 192 of A. C. Underwood's "History of the English Baptists." It is also in Morris' "Memoirs of Fuller," p. 311

be understood and obeyed.

In turning to Calvin's doctrine of the Bible and its inspiration we find something very similar to that above. To the Genevan Reformer it was "his infallible criterion and touchstone of truth." <sup>1</sup> François Wendel emphasises the prime place that Scripture had in the system of John Calvin with these words: "La vraie connaissance de Dieu ne peut être acquise que par le truchement de l'Écriture." <sup>2</sup> Dr. Dowey says that "the Bible is the sole norm of his (Calvin's) faith and theology." <sup>3</sup> The Fathers of the Church have no place alongside the Scriptures. In a Discourse on the Lausanne Articles Calvin writes defending the Reformed attitude to the Fathers, and says that we must be obedient to the Word of God rather than to the word of man. "We have always held them to belong to the number of those to whom such obedience is not due, and whose authority we will not so exalt, as in any way to debase the dignity of the Word of our Lord, to which alone is due complete obedience in the Church of Jesus Christ." <sup>4</sup>

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1. "The Teaching of Calvin," by A. Mitchell Hunter, p. 71
  2. "Calvin, Sources et Evolution de sa Pensée Religieuse," by François Wendel, p. 118
  3. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, p. 88
  4. "Theological Treatises," (Ed. J. K. S. Reid) p. 38

The inspiration of the Bible is sometimes emphasised from the Divine side and sometimes from the human. On the one hand Calvin can dismiss as irrelevant the character of Moses and Isaiah. "They were instruments in the hands of God: their tongues were guided by the Holy Ghost: they spake nothing of their own, but it was God that spake by them." <sup>1</sup> The details of the process of inspiration are given in the Commentary on Jeremiah 36, verses 4 - 6. "Here the prophet declares that he dictated to Baruch, a servant of God, what he had previously taught. But there is no doubt that God suggested to the prophet what might have been effaced from his memory; for not all things which we have formerly said always occur to us: therefore the greater part of so many words must have escaped the prophet had not God dictated them again to him. Jeremiah, then, stood between God and Baruch, for God, by his Spirit, presided over and guided the mind and tongue of the prophet. Now the prophet, the Spirit being his guide and teacher, recited what God had commanded....Jeremiah repeats again that nothing came from himself. We see, hence, that he did not dictate according to his own will what came to his mind, but that God suggested whatever he wished to be written by Baruch." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Sermon on II Timothy 3, 16-17, Eerdman's Edition, p. 132

2. Op. cit. p. 329

The idea of the Bible being dictated from heaven is present on a number of occasions. "The law and the prophets are not a doctrine delivered according to the will and pleasure of men but dictated by the Holy Spirit." <sup>1</sup> "The ancient prophecies were dictated by Christ." <sup>2</sup> The prophetic books of the Old Testament were "the composition of prophets, but dictated by the Holy Spirit." <sup>3</sup> The word "dictated" appears again in the Institutes at IV, 8, viii. On the other hand, due allowance is often made for the psychological processes involved in the task of authorship. Ezekiel, for example, eats the roll so that he "may bring it forth as food properly dressed." <sup>4</sup>

Whatever the emphasis may be, whether on the heavenly origin or on the earthly scribe, the words of man are the Word of God, without any error. E. A. Dowey points out that "closely connected with the process of the original inspiration of the Scriptures is their providential preservation. This is a necessary corollary - since it would profit little were the given oracles either lost or allowed to become impure." <sup>5</sup> "There is no hint anywhere

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1. Commentary on II Timothy 3, 16, p. 249

2. Commentary on I Peter 1, 11, p. 40

3. Institutes IV, 8, vi

4. Commentary on Ezekiel 2, 8 ff., p. 127

5. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, p. 102

in Calvin's writings that the original text contained any flaws at all." <sup>1</sup>

Differences in the Biblical writers do not deny the total control of the Holy Spirit. He permitted these variations. Commenting on Philippians 3, 1, Calvin says: "In this we have an instance tending to show that the Holy Spirit in his organs has not in every case avoided wit and humour, yet so as at the same time to keep at a distance from such pleasantries as were unworthy of his majesty." <sup>2</sup>

Similarly, when Calvin discovers a difference between the Old Testament and a New Testament quotation from it, he does not suggest that a mistake has entered in. "The discrepancies are 'accommodations' or simplifications, repeating the 'substance' of the passage, or even changing it completely to accord with the purposes of revelation. They are never inadvertencies." <sup>3</sup>

Calvin's recognition of the Divine control over the variations of the writers has a clear parallel in Andrew Fuller. The latter writes: "Though all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, it does not follow

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1. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, p. 100
  2. Op. cit. p. 87
  3. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, p. 105

that it is so in the same sense and degree. It required one degree of inspiration to foretell future events, and another to narrate facts which fell under the writer's knowledge. The one required less exercise of his own judgement, the other more. Inspiration, in the latter case, might be little more than a Divine superintendence, preserving him from error, and from other defects and faults, to which ordinary historians are subject." <sup>1</sup>

As Fuller discusses "The Harmony of Scripture with its own professions argued from the spirit and style in which it is written," he contrasts the Divine purpose and the human agent. "It is true that, having been communicated through human mediums, we may expect them, in a measure to be humanized; the peculiar turn and talents of each writer will be visible, and this will give them the character of variety; but, amidst all this variety, a mind capable of discerning the Divine excellence will plainly perceive in them the finger of God." <sup>2</sup>

Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter suggests that Calvin with some reluctance recognised the human element in the Scriptures, and that they "betrayed the qualities and temperaments of their respective authors....The idiosyncrasies of the writers were always under such control of the real

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 747

2. Ibid. p. 32

author of all, the Holy Spirit, that they manifested themselves exactly according to His requirements." <sup>1</sup> Any mistake that may be seen is interpreted quite simply as "a blunder made by an ignorant copyist." <sup>2</sup>

E. A. Dowey suggests that Calvin the theologian and Calvin the critical scholar were never quite integrated in this matter. "When he writes as a theologian about the inspiration....of Scripture, there is not the least hint that Calvin the scholar ever has found or ever may find an error in the text before him....On the other hand, when he sees an obvious error in the text before him, there is no indication that it makes any theological impression on him at all. It never causes him to retreat or to qualify or generally even to mention his general position of verbal inerrancy." <sup>3</sup>

It is not necessary to make further enquiries into Calvin's doctrine of the Scriptures and their inspiration to discover if he was, to use our misleading term, a fundamentalist. R. S. Wallace sums the matter up very adequately when he writes: "It seems....quite impossible that Calvin, if assailed on this point, would give sanction to any doctrine of inspiration that presupposed a differ-

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1. "The Teaching of Calvin," by A. Mitchell Hunter, p. 73

2. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," by E. A. Dowey, p. 104

3. Ibid. p. 103

ent relation between the divine and human elements than the sacramental relation which is so important a feature in Calvin's theology. In this relation the human action remains throughout real human action, and the divine action remains divine grace throughout. The divine character never becomes inherently and inseparably connected with the human element, though it is true that the human action and indeed the human element can be spoken of as if it did so partake of the divine nature." <sup>1</sup>

The only conclusion from this survey is the same as before, that Fuller is a genuine Calvinist.

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1. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," by R. S. Wallace, p. 114

4. Man.

It is convenient to begin with Fuller's Confession of Faith in examining his doctrine of man. It is set out in sections IV, V, XI, XII, XIII, and XV. He begins with the idea of man created in the image of God; he is made by God for the service of God, finding his true felicity in obedience to the law of God. Man is thus a responsible creature who by his breaking of the law of God has fallen under condemnation. "Men are born and grow up with a vile propensity to moral evil." <sup>1</sup> Hence they are unable to keep God's law. That inability is, however, "a moral and a criminal inability," <sup>2</sup> not a natural inability. It is not a lack of capacity, but a lack of willingness. That unwillingness hinders man from coming "unto Christ for life," <sup>3</sup> though "the excellence of this way of salvation" <sup>4</sup> should induce him "to repent of his sin, believe, approve, and embrace it with all his heart; to consider himself, as he really is, a vile lost sinner; to reject all pretensions to life in any other way; and to cast himself upon Christ, that he may be saved in this way of God's devising." <sup>5</sup> There is

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1. Confession, VII

3. Confession, XII

5. Confession, XI

2. Confession, VII

4. Confession, XI

the most solemn obligation laid on the Christian preacher to invite sinners to come to Christ, this being the method appointed by God whereby He draws them to Himself.

It was Fuller's doctrine of man that caused the greatest controversy in his time, so it is necessary to examine it closely. His Calvinist contemporaries said that Fuller departed from the faith at this point. He answered by saying that their Calvinism was a spurious one which John Calvin himself would have repudiated. A detailed examination of some of the points at issue must follow.

We may begin with the interpretation of those passages in Genesis which deal with the creation of man. Since both Calvin and Fuller wrote Commentaries on Genesis a comparison is easily made. Fuller emphasises the importance of the creative work on the sixth and last day, and says that it "is introduced differently from that of all other beings. It is described as though it were the result of a special counsel, and as though there were a peculiar importance attached to it; 'God said, Let us make man.' Under the Great Supreme, man was to be the lord of the lower world. On him would depend its future well-being. Man was to be a distinguished link in the chain of being; uniting the animal with the spiritual world, the frailty of the dust of the ground with the

breath of the Almighty; and possessing that consciousness of right and wrong which should render him a proper subject of moral government." <sup>1</sup>

The poetic form of the Hebrew language of Genesis 1, 26, with the two words  $\text{דָּבָר}$  and  $\text{מִטְּבֵּל}$ , has given rise to a long argument through the centuries on the precise meaning of each term, as if they had different meanings. Calvin refuses to make any distinction between the two terms, although he is well aware of the different interpretations given, mentioning that the term imago is applied to the common endowments of human nature, and the term similitudo to gratuitous gifts. <sup>2</sup> He goes on to point out that the language is characteristic of Hebrew writers, the same meaning being expressed in two different terms. He mentions that in Genesis 5, 1, "Likeness" is used "without making any mention of image." <sup>3</sup>

The denial of any distinction between the two terms is expressed much more bluntly in the Institutes, where Calvin says: "There is an obvious absurdity in those who indulge in philosophical speculation as to these names, placing the Zelion, that is, the image, in the

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 349

2. Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, p. 93

3. Ibid. p. 94

substance of the soul, and the Demuth, that is, the likeness, in its qualities and so forth." <sup>1</sup>

Andrew Fuller in effect maintains a distinction between "image" and "likeness." In his Commentary on Genesis he says that the image is partly natural and partly moral. The "natural image" consists of "reason" by which man is fitted for dominion over the creatures; the "moral image" consists of "righteousness and true holiness," by which man is made fit for communion with his Creator. <sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note in passing, that Calvin also quotes this Pauline phrase, saying that "he (Paul) made this image to consist in 'righteousness and true holiness.'" <sup>3</sup> Elsewhere in Fuller's Commentary the difference between "natural" and "moral" image is maintained, though the latter has been lost by sin.

This distinction that Fuller makes in his Commentary is not an isolated expression of his belief. In the Letter VIII of the series in Systematic Divinity, which is called "On the Perfections of God," he distinguishes between the perfections of God which are natural

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1. Institutes I, 15, iii

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 349

3. Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, p. 94. In the Geneva Bible there is a reference to this Pauline passage, Ephesians 4, 24, at Genesis 1, 27. Fuller links these two in his Letter to a Brother Minister, dated June 15th, 1801.

and those which are moral. "The former respect his greatness, the latter his goodness." Corresponding to this in the distinction in the "'image of God' in the soul of man; it is partly natural and partly moral. The moral image of God, consisting in 'righteousness and true holiness,' was effaced by sin; but the natural image of God, consisting in his rational and immortal nature, was not. In this respect, man, though fallen, still retains his Creator's image." <sup>1</sup>

Although certain differences of point of view begin to become apparent, we must take care not to magnify unnecessarily the distinctions and the differences. Many of these are more verbal than real. They are differences in the terms used, not in the meanings intended. The positive assertions of these two theologians concerning the nature of the imago Dei in man at the beginning are quite similar. For example, in the Institutes Calvin says: "At the beginning the image of God was manifested by light of intellect, rectitude of heart, and the soundness of every part." <sup>2</sup> This is expanded in the Genesis Commentary where the perfection of the nature of created man is emphasised. Adam is endued with a

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 749

2. Institutes I, 15, iv

right judgement; he has affections in harmony with reason; he has all his senses sound and well regulated; he truly excels in all that is good. No part of him exists in which some scintillations of the image do not shine forth. There is an attempering in the various parts of the soul, corresponding to their different functions. Hence perfect intelligence reigns and flourishes in the mind; rectitude is in attendance as a companion; every sense is moulded for obedience to reason. <sup>1</sup>

In his volume on "Calvin's Doctrine of Man," T. F. Torrance says: "The whole conception of order and rectitude plays...an important role in Calvin's thought." <sup>2</sup> It is thus significant to notice that this same conception has a place in the thought of Andrew Fuller. In the Dialogues between Crispus and Gaius he says: "Man has lost his moral rectitude by the fall." <sup>3</sup> In the Letter "On the Necessity of a Divine Revelation" he writes: "Even in innocence man was governed by a revealed law. It does not appear that he was left to find out the character or will of his Creator by his reason, though reason, being under the influence of rectitude, would lead him,

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1. Op. cit. Vol. I, pp. 94 - 95

2. Op. cit. p. 47

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 298

as he understood the mind of God, to love and obey it." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin and Fuller seem to move a little apart from one another in their doctrines of the Fall and its consequences. We have already noticed that Fuller believes that in the Fall only the imago in what he calls its "moral" aspect was destroyed. Man remains man, even after the Fall, though he is, of course, sinful man. Fuller has no illusions about traces of goodness left in man, and writes these words in a Sermon on Ephesians 3, 14-16. "Nothing good is found in fallen man; nothing grows spontaneously in that soil but what is evil." <sup>2</sup>

Such a statement has numerous parallels in the works of John Calvin. "No part (of man) is free from the infection of sin." <sup>3</sup> "The dominion of sin has complete possession of the soul." <sup>4</sup> In the Commentary on Psalm 51, 5, we read: "He now proceeds further than the mere acknowledgment of one or of many sins, confessing that he brought nothing but sin with him into the world, and that his nature was entirely depraved. He is thus led by the consideration of one offence of peculiar atrocity to the conclusion that he was born in iniquity,

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 745      2. Ibid. p. 659

3. Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, p. 95

4. Ibid. p. 95

and was absolutely destitute of all spiritual good. Indeed, every sin should convince us of the general truth of the corruption of our nature....We are cherished in sin from the first moment that we are in the womb." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin is perhaps not so consistent in his words about the image and the Fall as some of his disciples could have wished. On the one hand he seems to suggest that the image is quite destroyed by the sin of Adam, but on the other he says that "some obscure lineaments of that image are found remaining in us." <sup>2</sup> He adds to this comment the words, "yet they are so vitiated and maimed that they may truly be said to be destroyed." <sup>3</sup> Later in the same Commentary he writes: "Should any one object that this divine image has been obliterated, the solution is easy; first, there yet exists some remnant of it, so that man is possessed of no small dignity." <sup>4</sup> Other Commentaries and the Institutes contain similar statements. One of the most helpful of these is in the Commentary on the Epistle of James, where Calvin states: "Were any one to object and say that the image of God in human nature has been blotted out by the sin of Adam; we must indeed confess that it

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1. Commentary on Genesis, Vol.I, p. 290

2. Ibid. p. 95

3. Ibid. p. 95

4. Ibid. p. 296

has been miserably deformed, but in such a way that some of its lineaments still appear. Righteousness and rectitude, and the freedom of choosing what is good have been lost; but many excellent endowments, by which we excel the brutes still remain." <sup>1</sup>

A similar statement is found in the Commentary on Ephesians. "We are all born as dead men, and we live as dead men, until we are made partakers of the life of Christ...Some kind of life, I acknowledge, does remain in us, while we are still at a distance from Christ; for unbelief does not altogether destroy the outward senses, or the will, or the other faculties of the soul." <sup>2</sup>

When the differences between the terms used by the two men are understood, it becomes clear that Calvin and Fuller are both saying something about man which is in large measure in agreement. They both acknowledge certain psychological capacities in man, before the Fall and also after the Fall. Fuller calls them the "natural" image; Calvin describes them as "excellent endowments," or "obscure lineaments" (of the imago) or "natural gifts." <sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to note that in T. F. Torrance's volume "Calvin's Doctrine of Man," in dealing with this

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1. Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, p. 323

2. Ibid. pp. 219 - 220

3. Brief Confession of Faith, p. 131

point, he uses the phrase "spiritual image,"<sup>1</sup> saying that when it was lost the whole personality was corrupted. "Perversity took over from rectitude and integrity the character and mastery of the whole person of man."<sup>2</sup> Thus we come near to Fuller's language, as well as his thought, as he speaks of the loss of the "moral" image through the Fall, and the subsequent perversion of our whole nature through sin.

This may be illustrated in relation to the natural capacity of reasoning. Man, as created, has perfect intelligence flourishing and reigning, says Calvin.<sup>3</sup> He has a rational nature, says Fuller.<sup>4</sup> After the Fall that intellectual capacity does not operate according to rectitude. Man does not, indeed cannot, reason truly. The instrument designed to produce thoughts of a perfect shape has been marred, and only spoiled shapes can be produced. Fuller, in writing of the capacity of reasoning, says that it "is shattered and broken by sin, and liable to a thousand variations through blindness and prejudice."<sup>5</sup>

Both Calvin and Fuller frequently discuss the total

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1. Op. cit. p. 90

2. Ibid. pp. 90 - 91

3. Commentary on Genesis, Vol. I, p. 95

4. Fuller's "Works," p. 749

5. Ibid. p. 541

devastating consequences to the race of men brought about by the Fall. Fuller's Confession, Section VI reads: "I believe the first sin of Adam was not merely personal but that he stood as our representative, so that when he fell we fell in him, and became liable to condemnation and death, and what is more, are all born into the world with a vile propensity to sin against God." The words "vile propensity" come easily to Fuller when he is thinking of this matter for they appear again in Section VII of the same Confession. "I believe that men are now born and grow up with a vile propensity to moral evil....They have no heart remaining for God, but are full of wicked aversion to him. Their very mind and conscience are defiled. Their ideas of the excellence of good and of the evil of sin are, as it were, obliterated." In his Commentary on Genesis Fuller states that Adam's punishment "extends to the whole human race." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin expresses himself thus in the Institutes. "All of us....come into the world tainted with the contagion of sin." <sup>2</sup> "The impurity of parents is transmitted to their children, so that all, without exception

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 354

2. Institutes II, 1, v

are originally depraved. The commencement of this depravity will not be found until we ascend to the first parent of all as the fountain head. We must, therefore, hold it for certain that, in regard to human nature, Adam was not merely a progenitor, but, as it were, a root, and that accordingly by his corruption, the whole human race was deservedly vitiated." <sup>1</sup> In his Commentary on Genesis Calvin writes: "The defection of our first parents proved the destruction of the whole race." <sup>2</sup>

The universal corruption wrought by the Fall must now be considered in its relation to man's capacity to give ear to the saving Word. We have noted in the historical section how Fuller clashed with so many of his contemporaries on this matter. They believed that general invitations to the unconverted could not have any place in a genuine Calvinism. J. M. Cramp says of Gill and Brine that they were "supralapsarians, holding that God's election was irrespective of the fall of man. They taught eternal justification....Although they themselves inculcated practical godliness, and so were not justly liable to the charge of Antinomianism, there is

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1. Institutes II, 1, vi

2. Op. cit. p. 154

reason to fear that numbers of those who imbibed their doctrinal views kept out of sight, or but feebly urged the obligation of believers to personal holiness.... They were satisfied with stating men's danger and assuring them that they were on the high road to perdition. But they did not call upon them to 'repent and believe the gospel'....And the Churches did not, could not, under their instruction engage in efforts for the conversion of souls." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller believed, after considerable intellectual and spiritual wrestling, that a genuine Calvinism was an evangelical Calvinism, permitting appeals to the unconverted, and indeed, requiring such addresses of invitation. This is incorporated into the Confession, Section XV. "I believe it is the duty of every minister of Christ plainly and faithfully to preach the gospel to all who will hear it;....I therefore believe free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings to them to be not only consistent, but directly adapted, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ. I consider it as a part of my duty which I could not omit without being guilty of the blood of souls." Fuller, as an honest man, felt that it was necessary for him as the

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1. "Baptist History," by J. M. Cramp, p. 435

Minister of the Particular, that is, Calvinist Baptist Church at Kettering, to make clear from the beginning his major difference from so many of his acquaintances in the denomination.

An earlier expression of Andrew Fuller's concern about addressing sinners as such is in his diary for 30th August 1780. He says there: "We shackle ourselves too much in our addresses to sinners; that we have bewildered and lost ourselves by taking the decrees of God as rules of action. Surely Peter and Paul never felt such scruples in their addresses as we do. They addressed their hearers as men - fallen men: as we should warn and admonish persons who were blind and on the brink of some dreadful precipice." <sup>1</sup>

In "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation" Fuller makes it plain that he is not calling in question in any way the doctrine of election. He fully accepts it, as we have seen in Section VIII of his Confession. We shall discover that he frequently builds up his argument upon it. Alongside any such doctrine, however, a place had to be found for invitations to sinful men.

The argument of Andrew Fuller is quite a simple one. 1. The evidence of Scripture is plain. Uncon-

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1. "Fuller's Memoirs," by Dr. Ryland, p. 141

verted sinners are frequently addressed by Christ and by the Apostles, and are invited to repent of their sins and turn to God. These passages are some embarrassment to the hyper-Calvinists, Fuller declares. "False Calvinism looks with an evil eye on the exhortations, warnings, and invitations to the unconverted, in the four evangelists, and the Acts of the Apostles." <sup>1</sup> He goes on in an Essay, "Some Remarks on Two Sermons by W. W. Horne of Yarmouth," to assert that the name false Calvinism is no misnomer, and that the writings of Calvin himself and of all Calvinist writers till about a hundred years earlier contained sentiments that Mr. Horne would have reckoned Arminianism in any anonymous writer. Such a charge would have to be laid by Mr. Horne against Calvin, Goodwin, Owen, Charnock, Flavel, and Bunyan. "These men believed and preached the doctrines of grace; but not in such a way as to exclude exhortations to the unconverted to repent and believe in Jesus Christ." <sup>2</sup> The false Calvinism is in reality Antinomianism, and contrary to the teachings of the Reformers, the Puritans, the Nonconformists, as well as the Apostles.

2. The refusal of men to heed the exhortation, or to accept the invitation does not lie in any physical

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 889

2. Ibid. p. 889

or psychological incapacity, but in a moral unwillingness. The Confession, Section XV, expresses it in this way: "I believe the inability of men to spiritual things to be wholly of the moral, and therefore of the criminal kind." In the "Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation" this point is put in another way. "If the inability of sinners to believe in Christ were of the same nature as that of a dead body in a grave to rise up and walk, it were absurd to suppose that they would on this account fall under the Divine censure. No man is reprov'd for not doing that which is naturally impossible; but sinners are reprov'd for not believing, and given to understand that it is solely owing to their criminal ignorance, pride, dishonesty of heart, and aversion from God." <sup>1</sup>

Andrew Fuller labours to establish the validity of this distinction between natural and moral ability, (or inability), the terms of which at least he derived from Jonathan Edwards, <sup>2</sup> though the ideas involved were present in his mind before he ever knew the writings of the New England theologian.

In his reply to Philanthropos who had criticized the "Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation," Fuller devotes

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 162

2. See Jonathan Edwards "On the Will," Part I, Section IV, "Of the distinction of Natural and Moral Necessity and Inability."

a chapter to "Natural and Moral Inability." Philanthropos had allowed the distinction to some extent, but had suggested that moral inability was no more culpable than natural inability, first, because it could not be avoided. Adam's seed shared the punishment of Adam's transgression. Secondly, it was so great that it could not be overcome; and thirdly, grace to overcome is not given. It is the first of these objections that is the weightiest, and to meet it the Kettering man brings all his theological learning. He emphasises the point which Philanthropos a trifle reluctantly admits, that there is a relation between Adam and his posterity, so that "men become sinners in consequence of Adam's fall." <sup>1</sup> Fuller presses a question on his opponent. "How can we be ruined and depraved by that which does not in any sense constitute us blameworthy?" <sup>2</sup> It is true, of course, that so far as men are concerned they know evil propensities only as they are revealed in evil actions, but the propensity and the action are both condemned. If a man has a bad temper, and offers the excuse that he got it from his father who was bad-tempered before him, such an excuse is not accepted as an extenuating circumstance, but is treated as an aggravation of the offence. Psalm 51, 5

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 246

2. Ibid. p. 246

is quoted to prove this point.

Further, sin is more than the positive acts; it includes the inward attitudes. "The want of a disposition," says Fuller, is offensive to God. <sup>1</sup> Philanthropos tries to make "moral inability" into "natural inability," since it is not in our nature as fallen creatures to respond to the Word of God. Fuller easily shows that the term "natural" is in fact ambiguous, and that what is truly natural to man has been lost by the Fall. "The sin of our nature" means "not any thing which belongs to our nature as human, but what is, by the fall, so interwoven with it as if it were, though in fact it is not, a part of it; and so deeply rooted in our souls as to become natural, as it were to us." <sup>2</sup>

Summing up briefly, the whole argument is this. Philanthropos and the others who oppose Fuller in this matter of a man's response to the Word of God say, "He would if he could." Fuller takes the verbs and reverses their position, saying, "He could if he would."

Many of these things which are emphasised by the Kettering man are to be found in Calvin's writings. In the Institutes we discover Calvin defending the demands that God makes against the supposed inability of man to

1. Fuller's "Works," p. 217

2. Ibid. p. 217

meet them. He writes: "Whatever his demands from us may be, as he can only require what is right, we are necessarily under a natural obligation to obey. Our inability to do so is our own fault." <sup>1</sup>

A distinction between natural and moral ability is implied in another section of the Institutes where Calvin writes that the moral law in the Ten Commandments helps to give a knowledge of God and a knowledge of self. In the second of these it is done "by promulgating the rule of his justice (a rule, to the rectitude of which our nature, from being depraved and perverted, is continually opposed, and to the perfection of which our ability, from its infirmity and nervelessness for good, is far from being able to attain), he charges us both with impotence and unrighteousness." <sup>2</sup> The "ability" (Calvin's word is facultas), which is lacking is a moral ability, not a natural ability.

The Genevan Reformer goes on in the following paragraph to say that the Law requires due reverence from men. We are without excuse if we do not acknowledge it. We cannot "plead as an excuse that we want the power." <sup>3</sup> "Our inability to do so is our own fault." <sup>4</sup>

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1. II, 8, ii

2. II, 8, i

3. II, 8, i

4. II, 8, ii

The ambiguity of the term "nature" is understood very well by Calvin. We meet in his writings a double use of the word "natural." It describes the proper qualities of a thing, the character and purpose of its creation and existence. It also describes the present character resulting from sin. Commenting on this dual usage, E. A. Dowey says: "The 'nature' of man is both his original, created goodness, from which any lapse is unnatural; and it is also the sinfulness or 'natural' disposition of man as against his created goodness."<sup>1</sup> The twofold usage is found in the Institutes, II, 1, xi. "We say, then, that man is corrupted by a natural viciousness, but not by one which proceeded from nature. In saying that it proceeded not from nature, we mean that it was rather an adventitious event which befell man than a substantial property assigned to him from the beginning." Again, when writing of the "monstrous proceeding" of the Fall, he says of it that "though palpably repugnant to the order of nature, is natural to man."<sup>2</sup>

Examples of Calvin's belief in the place of an invitation to sinners to repent are not hard to discover in his writings. Illustrations can be found in the most unlikely places. For example, when he is dealing

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1. "The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology," p. 66

2. Institutes I, 11, iv

with the subject of Reprobation, a topic which might be regarded as leaving little room for exhortation to men to believe, he specifically states that this doctrine does not exclude the preaching of the Word to sinful men. "Another impudent and malicious calumny against this doctrine is, that it destroys all exhortations to a pious life....Christ commands us to believe in him, and yet there is nothing false or contrary to his command in the statement which he afterwards makes: 'No man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father.' (John 6, 65). Let preaching then have its free course, that it may lead men to faith, and dispose them to persevere with uninterrupted progress." <sup>1</sup>

Other examples from the Institutes may be added to the above. "Pardon and forgiveness are offered by the preaching of the Gospel." <sup>2</sup> "God indeed declares that he would have all men to repent, and addresses exhortation in common to all." <sup>3</sup> Calvin goes on to add to these words that the efficacy of the addresses and exhortations "depends on the Spirit of regeneration." With this Fuller could heartily agree. He attributed the effectiveness of any such preaching to God Who was

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1. Institutes III, 23, xiii

2. III, 3, 1

3. III, 3, xxi

pleased to use it as a means to accomplish His saving ends.

In his Commentary on Psalm 2, (a Psalm which Fuller considered very carefully as he moved away from hyper-Calvinism to evangelical Calvinism), Calvin has numerous exhortations. Dealing with verses 10 and 11 he writes: "David....proceeds now in the character of a prophet and teacher, to exhort the unbelieving to repentance....He addresses by name kings and rulers....If David spare not even kings themselves....much more does his exhortation apply to the common class of men, in order that all, from the highest to the lowest may humble themselves before God. By the adverb 'now,' he signifies the necessity of their speedy repentance, since they will not always be favoured with the like opportunity." <sup>1</sup>

More emphatic than that is the Commentary on John 3, 16. "He has employed the universal term whosoever, both to invite all indiscriminately to partake of life, and to cut off every excuse from unbelievers. Such is also the importance of the term world, which he formerly used; for though nothing will be found in the world that is worthy of the favour of God, yet he shows himself to be reconciled to the whole world, when he in-

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1. Op. cit. pp. 22-23

vites all men without exception to the faith of Christ." <sup>1</sup>

Such words as "invite indiscriminately," and "invite without exception" are words that Fuller's hyper-Calvinist contemporaries had forgotten or ignored. They justify the claim of the Kettering man to be truly Calvinist in inviting and exhorting all sinners to repent and to come to Christ.

Some remarks may be introduced at this point about Fuller's interpretation of "faith." In his Confession he says that "true faith" includes repentance of sin, whole-hearted approval of God's way of salvation, and a simple reliance upon Christ. Various controversies, particularly with Archibald M'Lean, led him to develop this theme.

In his Preface to "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation," as he traces a little of the development of his thought, Fuller says that he was led to consider faith as "a persuasion of the truth of what God has said." <sup>2</sup> He was vaguely aware that others, including Mr. Sandeman, as he thought, regarded faith as "a general assent to the doctrines of revelation, unaccompanied with love

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1. Commentary on St. John, p. 125

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 150

to them, or a dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation." <sup>1</sup> Between the publication of the first edition of his book and the second edition, Fuller managed to read some of the works of Sandeman, and also of Archibald M'Lean, and in an Appendix explains wherein he feels he differs from these men. <sup>2</sup>

The title of the Appendix is, "On the question whether the existence of a holy disposition of heart be necessary to believing." The reason for the publication of such an Appendix was a treatise written by Mr. M'Lean in which he joined issue with Fuller on a number of points raised in private correspondence. Fuller did not wish to debate the ethics of a public answer to private letters, but he was concerned that his position should be fairly stated.

Various points of agreement are first stressed,

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 150
  2. The details of the controversy between Fuller and M'Lean are given in Dr. Mitchell's thesis on "Archibald M'Lean," (in New College Library, Edinburgh). Dr. Mitchell does not do full justice to Andrew Fuller's position in his discussion of this matter, and ascribes to Fuller views which are certainly not his. For example, he includes Fuller among those who regard faith as the inward principle of grace implanted in the heart by the operation of the Spirit, separate from, and prior to the knowledge of the Word of God.

such as the opposition of faith to good works as a ground of acceptance with God. The great dispute between the two men is over the content of faith. M'Lean makes it severely intellectual; Fuller regards it as thoroughly personal, having intellectual, emotional, and volitional aspects. Some of the latter's positive thoughts are given under eight headings.

"First, Faith is a grace of the Holy Spirit." <sup>1</sup>

"Secondly, it is that in the exercise of which we 'give glory to God.'" <sup>2</sup>

"Thirdly, Faith depends upon choice or the state of the heart towards God." <sup>3</sup>

Fourthly, Faith is presented in Scripture as "implying repentance for sin." <sup>4</sup>

"Fifthly, Faith is often expressed by terms which indicate the exercise of affection." <sup>5</sup>

"Sixthly, Belief is expressly said to be with the heart." <sup>6</sup>

Seventhly, the lack of faith is attributed "to moral causes, or the want of a right disposition of heart." <sup>7</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 181

3. Ibid. p. 182

5. Ibid. p. 182

7. Ibid. p. 182

2. Ibid. p. 181

4. Ibid. p. 182

6. Ibid. p. 182

Eighthly, the opposite of faith is unbelief, which is more than just intellectual error. It is "a positive and practical rejection of the gospel." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller's later work, "Strictures on Sandemanianism," which is a series of Twelve Letters, takes up many of these points again. The question at issue is "the nature of justifying faith." <sup>2</sup> The Sandemanian view is presented as inadequate in theory, and impossible in practice. Its inadequacy lies in its partial character. It limits itself even in its use of language in describing the Christian religion. At the same time its adherents regard their opinions as clear-sighted. "Those who have drunk into this system generally value themselves on their clear views; thus they scarcely ever use any other phrase by which to designate the state of a converted man than his knowing the truth; and thus all those Scripture passages which speak of knowing the truth are constantly quoted as being in their favour, though they seldom, if ever, mean knowledge as distinguished from approbation, but as including it." <sup>3</sup> Fuller later on in the same Letter describes Sandemanianism as "litigious, conceited, and censorious towards all who do not embrace it." <sup>4</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 182

2. Ibid. p. 258

3. Ibid. p. 259

4. Ibid. p. 259

Three consequences of the Sandemanian notion of faith must be considered.

1. On this interpretation "repentance is not necessary to forgiveness." <sup>1</sup>

2. "Faith in Christ is not a duty and unbelief is not a sin." <sup>2</sup>

3. "On this principle, calls, invitations, and exhortations to believe have no place in the Christian ministry." <sup>3</sup>

A whole Letter, the fifth, is particularly concerned with the first of these, and is entitled "On the Connexion between repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." <sup>4</sup> Fuller is ready to concede the point that repentance and faith may be contemporaneous. "I have no objection to faith being considered as contemporary with repentance in the order of time, provided the latter were made to consist in an acquiescence with the gospel way of salvation, so far as it is understood." <sup>5</sup> Yet the New Testament order is commonly repentance and faith, not faith and repentance.

The criticism of the second consequence of the belief of Mr. Sandeman is forthright. "The faith,

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 263

2. Ibid. p. 263

3. Ibid. p. 263

4. Ibid. p. 269

5. Ibid. p. 269

therefore, which he (Mr. Sandeman) allows to be necessary to justification includes no obedience, which is the same thing as its being no duty. And if it be not a duty unbelief is not a sin." <sup>1</sup> "Mr. Sandeman is consistent with himself, however inconsistent he may be with the Scriptures. In confining faith to the understanding, he was aware he disowned its being an act, and therefore, in his usual strain of banter, selected some of the grossest representations of his opponents, and endeavoured to hold up acts of faith to ridicule." <sup>2</sup>

Mr. M'Lean's position is declared to be inconsistent, for while he thinks of faith as an act of obedience, he refuses to associate it with the will, "except in its effects." <sup>3</sup> The influence of Mr. Sandeman is said to be too strong in Mr. M'Lean, and he does not realise the inconsistency of these views with others in the Bible. "Nothing can obtain obedience but that which includes the state or exercises of the will, or has some dependence upon it." <sup>4</sup>

Fuller emphasises the place of the will in his "Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation." "If faith were an involuntary reception of the truth, and were produced

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 263

2. Ibid. p. 263

3. Ibid. p. 263

4. Ibid. p. 263

merely by the power of evidence; if the prejudiced or unprejudiced state of the mind had no influence in retarding or promoting it; in fine, if it were wholly an intellectual and not a moral exercise; nothing more than rationality, or a capacity of understanding the nature of evidence would be necessary to it. In this case it would not be a duty; nor would unbelief be a sin, but a mere mistake of the judgement." <sup>1</sup>

Some attention has already been given to the third point, dealing with calls, invitations, and exhortations to men to believe in the Gospel. How can one "call, invite, or exhort a man to that in which his will has no concern?" <sup>2</sup> Mr. Sandeman, when asked how he would preach the Gospel to a sinner said, "I would set before him all the evidence furnished by the gospel." <sup>3</sup> Fuller's answer is brief and to the point: God's way is not just offering advice. "The prophets and apostles....addressed every power and passion of the human mind." <sup>4</sup>

A glance at Calvin on some of these points is very interesting. The Institutes, Book III, chapters 2 and 3, deal with the subject of faith at some length. Calvin had in mind as he wrote a very different situation from that in which Fuller lived and worked, and there-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 174

2. Ibid. p. 265

3. Ibid. p. 265

4. Ibid. p. 265

fore many of the illustrations have significance only in that 16th century setting. Faith, Calvin asserts, is "no mere opinion or persuasion."<sup>1</sup> It is not just a "certain common assent to the Gospel History."<sup>2</sup> It must not be marred by "divesting it of love."<sup>3</sup> "Faith is a knowledge of the divine favour towards us, and a full persuasion of its truth."<sup>4</sup> "The divine favour to which faith is said to have respect, we understand to include in it the possession of salvation and eternal life."<sup>5</sup> "The word is not received in faith when it merely flutters in the brain, but when it has taken deep root in the heart."<sup>6</sup> Faith is not to be separated from hope. "Wherever this living faith exists, it must have the hope of eternal life as its inseparable companion."<sup>7</sup> "If faith is (as has been said) a firm persuasion of the truth of God - a persuasion that it can never be false, never deceive, never be in vain, those who have received this assurance must at the same time expect that God will perform his promises, which in their conviction are absolutely true; so that in one word hope is nothing more than the expectation of those things which faith

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1. III, 2, 1

2. III, 2, 1

3. III, 2, ix

4. III, 2, xii

5. III, 2, xxviii

6. III, 2, xxxiii

7. III, 2, xlii

previously believes to have been truly promised by God." <sup>1</sup>

Many of these passages are similar to the earlier quotations from Fuller's writings. For both men faith is the total response of man, in mind, and in heart, and in will, to the gracious and merciful approach of God in Christ.

When Calvin turns to consider the relation of faith to repentance he takes up a very different point of view from that found in Fuller. Calvin is very blunt in his comments on that matter. "That repentance not only always follows faith, but is produced by it ought to be without controversy." <sup>2</sup> He refers the reader to his Commentary on John 1, 13, where he tries to prove that faith is "the fruit of spiritual regeneration." <sup>3</sup> The pungent remarks of the Genevan continue in his assertion that "those who think that repentance precedes faith instead of flowing from, or being produced by it, as the fruit by the tree, have never understood its nature, and are moved to adopt that view on very insufficient grounds." <sup>4</sup> Even the Biblical order of "repent and believe" is treated as of no significance. Any emphasis upon this is called "clinging superstitiously to the juxta-position of the

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1. III, 2, xlii

2. III, 3, 1

3. Op. cit. p. 43

4. III, 3, 1

syllables," without attending "to the coherence of meaning in the words." <sup>1</sup>

A certain concession is made by Calvin later in the same section. He does not intend some distinct period of time between faith and repentance. "When we attribute the origin of repentance to faith, we do not dream of some period of time in which faith is to give birth to it." <sup>2</sup> Repentance and faith are not two quite different things. They may be distinguished in thought but they are never separate in actuality.

In noting the different orders that Calvin and Fuller propose, it may be asked whether they are not in danger of over-defining, and thus destroying the dynamic character of the relationship between God and man as His Spirit brings man into the filial relationship of trust and obedience. If faith be given a minimal meaning, then repentance will follow; but if faith be given any significant meaning it will include repentance. Corresponding to the free, electing grace on the Divine side is "repentance-faith" on the human. The two, however, must be conjoined. Fuller usefully expresses this when he writes: "When we are said to be justified by faith, it is such a faith as involves

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1. III, 3, ii

2. III, 3, ii

repentance; equally so as, when we are said to be forgiven on repentance, it is such repentance as involves believing." <sup>1</sup>

Our consideration of the doctrine of man points to the same conclusion as before. Fuller's Calvinism is a genuine reflection of the theology of John Calvin. If his contemporaries accused him of departing from the true Calvinistic faith, Fuller could rightly defend himself by saying that it was their interpretation of Calvinism that was amiss, not his.

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 185

### 5. Election.

Andrew Fuller never wanted to question the doctrine of election, even when trying to justify his appeals to the unconverted. In his article on "Calvinism" in the Hannah Adams volume "View of Religions," he makes this point quite particularly. He declares that the Calvinists "do not consider predestination as affecting the agency or accountableness of creatures, or as being to them any rule of conduct. On the contrary, they suppose men to act as freely, and to be as much proper subjects of calls, warnings, exhortations, promises, and threatenings as if no decree respecting them existed." <sup>1</sup> He refers the readers for confirmation of this to two passages in the Institutes, III, 22, x, and II, 5, iv.

We find the same thing in the second Letter on Systematic Divinity. The Christian Minister, viewing the doctrine of election "in its proper connexions, will find nothing in it to hinder the free use of warnings, invitations, and persuasions, either to the converted or the unconverted." <sup>2</sup>

Part III of the "Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation"

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1. Op. cit. p. 67

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 741

contains "Answers to Objections." It begins with an examination of the relation of appeals to this doctrine of the Divine decrees. Fuller points out that "the great body of the divines who have believed those doctrines have also believed the other,"<sup>1</sup> that is, appeals to the unconverted. The names of Augustine and Calvin are singled out for special mention.

It is plain that the doctrine of election was an essential part of Fuller's theology. An indication of that is the fact that defences of it sometimes appear as asides because he is sure that none will wish to question his belief in it.

In a Fugitive Piece, as it is styled in his "Works," which bears the title "The Connexions in which the Doctrine of Election is introduced in the Holy Scriptures," Fuller prefaces his observations with this comment: "The truth of the doctrine I may in this place take for granted as a matter clearly revealed in the word of God."<sup>2</sup> In his reply to Philanthropos, in the chapter on the death of Christ, he begins his sixth point of Section I as follows: "If the doctrine of eternal, personal, and unconditional election be a truth, that of a special design in the death of Christ must necessarily follow."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 167

2. Ibid. p. 989

3. Ibid. p. 225

(It may be noticed in passing that these adjectives, "eternal," and "personal" are used in connection with Election in Section VIII of Fuller's Confession. They are found in various places in his writings when this doctrine is mentioned). Continuing the argument with Philanthropos, he says that he does not expect that his opponent will admit this dogma of the Divine decrees, but he could urge "all those scriptures and arguments which appear....to prove the doctrine of election."<sup>1</sup> He then proceeds to offer a catena of quotations which appear to him to be conclusive on the subject, and quite incontrovertible except by some distortion of their meaning. This list is reminiscent of the many passages cited by Calvin in the Institutes, III, 21 and 22. Many passages can be found common to both lists.

An incidental defence of the doctrine of Election is found in an article of Fuller's in the "Evangelical Magazine" for 1795. This is one of a series of Dialogues and Letters between Crispus and Gaius on various doctrines of the Christian Faith.<sup>2</sup> The imaginary Crispus takes up certain aspects of human depravity which had been expounded by Gaius, (Fuller). The

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 225

2. These appear in Fuller's "Works," pp. 294 - 308

author makes Crispus say: "If your views (on total depravity) be just, the doctrine of free or unconditional election may be clearly demonstrated and proved to be a dictate of right reason. If men be utterly depraved, they lie entirely at the discretion of God either to save or not to save them. If any are saved, it must be by an act of free grace. If some are brought to believe in Christ, while others continue in unbelief, (which accords with continued fact), the difference between them must be altogether of grace. But if God make a difference in time, he must have determined to do so for eternity; for to suppose God to act without a purpose is depriving him of wisdom; and to suppose any new purpose to arise in his mind would be to accuse him of mutability. Here, therefore, we are landed upon election - sovereign, unconditional election." <sup>1</sup>

One does not often find the terms "supralapsarian" and "infralapsarian" in Fuller, but some of his writings give a clue to the position he takes. For example, there is a curious, and to us rather quaint phrase, in Section IX of his Confession. He says of the Fall that it "did not at all disconcert the Great Eternal; but that he had from eternity formed a people upon the sup-

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1. "Evangelical Magazine," 1795, p. 186. The quotation is found in Fuller's "Works," on p. 306

position of that event, (as well knowing that it would be)."

In his "Answers to Queries," Fuller deals with the question, "Was the fall of Adam foredetermined or only foreseen by God?" and by his answer we have a plain indication that the writer may be called a supralapsarian. He declares that "the proof that the fall of man was an object of Divine foreknowledge is merely inferential; and from the same kind of proof we may conclude that it was, all things considered, an object of predetermination." <sup>1</sup> A distinction has to be made, he suggests, between the efficient and the permissive decrees of God. God is the true cause of moral good, "but with respect to moral evil, God permits it, and it was his eternal purpose so to do." <sup>2</sup>

In a Letter to John Ryland, written from Kettering on March 22nd 1783, Fuller uses the term "supralapsarian." He writes to his friend about the practical significance

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 971
  2. "Evangelical Magazine," 1795, p. 241. ("Works," p. 971) Calvin in his Institutes; (III, 23, viii), will not allow the distinction between efficient and permissive decrees, between the will and the permission of God. If the consequence of this refusal seems to create difficulties for faith, we are thrust back upon the inscrutable will of God. Our judgement is quite inadequate to comprehend His boundless wisdom.

of a supralapsarian and a sublapsarian theology in the work of preaching to sinners. "I have formerly professed myself a supralapsarian, at a time when, perhaps, I hardly knew the meaning of that hard word. I own I am not now versed in the arguments on either side. Only one thing has for some time struck me; namely, that the sublapsarian scheme is of use to me in the conviction of sinners. I can prove to them that they lie absolutely at the discretion of God, and have no claim whatever upon him; that to them belongeth nothing but shame and everlasting confusion; that therefore God is entirely at liberty in chusing whom he will. I cannot make this use of the supralapsarian scheme; for then I must tell them, that as CREATURES God had a right to chuse some to a higher degree of bliss than others. This cannot be charged with injustice, and so far may silence them; but it cannot convict them of sin, or bring them to fall at the feet of God." <sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps a little surprising to find such a man as Fuller discussing the usefulness of a doctrine, rather than its truth. Two comments must be made about this. First, the topic is being discussed in a private letter, not in a public writing. Secondly, we have an

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1. Letter at Regent's Park College Library, Oxford. Fuller's archaic spelling is retained.

insight into Fuller's mind and heart. His heart yearns for unbelievers that they may receive the Gospel, and his mind is ever busy thinking of new ways of commending that Gospel to them. Yet he is all the time aware that there may be a conflict between the accepted dogmas and his new method of calling on sinners to repent.

There were plenty of critics ready to take exception to a doctrine of "discriminating grace," as Fuller calls it on one occasion.<sup>1</sup> In the First Letter of the series "The Calvinist and Socinian Systems examined and compared," Fuller draws attention to the criticism of Dr. Priestley, who had written about "arbitrary" predestination. Our writer says that this is not the adjective to use. "The term arbitrary conveys the idea of caprice; and in this connexion denotes that in predestination, according to the Calvinistic notion of it, God resolves upon the fates of men, and appoints them to this or that, without any reason for so doing. But there is no justice in this representation. There is no decree in the Divine mind that we consider as void of reason.....The sovereignty of God is a wise, and not a capricious sovereignty....If it seem good in the sight of God, it must, all things considered be good."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 168

2. Ibid. p. 52

These remarks are consistent with what has already been noted above <sup>1</sup> about the distinction between things which are "above reason," and those which are "contrary to reason." The total work of God, just because it is His, has many things in it which may be puzzling to man. The human mind and human reason are not the measuring rod by which to assess the Divine purposes.

Associated with this criticism from the Socinian Priestley is a further criticism, that Calvinism in general, and the doctrine of election in particular, are not conducive to morality. Fuller quotes the excited language of Llewellyn's "Tracts," and describes it as extravagant and virulent ranting. Llewellyn had written: "I challenge the whole body and being of moral evil itself to invent, or inspire or whisper any thing blacker or more wicked; yes, if sin itself had all the wit, the tongues and pens of all men and angels, to all eternity, I defy the whole to say any thing of God worse than this. O sin, thou hast spent and emptied thyself in the doctrine of John Calvin....I thus denounce the doctrine as the rancour of devils....And this I do, because I know and believe that God is love; and therefore his decrees, works, and ways are also love, and cannot be otherwise." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Supra, pages 119 - 122

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 65

Such wild remarks Fuller refuses to try to answer. The main charge, however, he does refute. Calvinism promotes morality, and even the doctrine of election is not without its significance in this. Elsewhere he says: "The doctrine of election, as it is taught in the Scriptures is of a humbling and holy tendency." Since salvation is ascribed in this doctrine entirely to sovereign grace, it abases the pride of man. He has nothing whereof to glory. Having found rest for his soul in a proper humility he is able to be more ardent and diligent in his endeavours.

In a Letter written from Kettering in August 1784, to two relatives, Fuller makes the same point again. Election encourages believers in such spiritual exercises as prayer. "The doctrine of election is the greatest encouragement, instead of a discouragement, to prayer. He that decreed that any one should be finally saved, decreed that it should be in the way of prayer; as much as he that hath decreed what we shall possess of the things of this life, has decreed that it shall be in the way of industry." <sup>1</sup>

One of the most important emphases in Fuller's theology is his insistence on both election and human

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1. Letter at Regent's Park College Library, Oxford.

responsibility. He does not pretend to know how they can be reconciled in one system of thought, but he insists on belief in both. "That there is a consistency between the Divine decrees and the free agency of men I believe; but whether I can account for it is another thing. Whether it can be accounted for at all, so as to enable us clearly to comprehend it, I cannot tell. Be that as it may, it does not distress me; I believe in both, because both appear to me to be plainly revealed." <sup>1</sup>

In turning to Calvin's teaching on Election, we find that the first adjective which he applies to it in the great chapter of the Institutes which deals with the doctrine is "eternal." <sup>2</sup> This, as we have noticed, is one of the words that Fuller uses to describe the Divine decree. (Another adjective, which is a favourite with Calvin, is "gratuitous.") Calvin goes on to speak of the mystery and perplexity of the theme. He counsels against "audacity and wickedness" <sup>3</sup> in attempting to probe too fully into the secrets of this. Man cannot penetrate to the remotest recesses of the inextricable

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 229

2. III, 21, 1

3. III, 21, 1

labyrinth of the Divine wisdom, and it is not right that he should try to do so. God has revealed enough for us. For the rest, we may adore the "sublime eternal wisdom." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller said that the knowledge of election promoted humility. Calvin expresses the same idea in a negative form. "It is plain how greatly ignorance of this principle...impairs true humility....Those who preclude access, and would not have any one to obtain a taste of this doctrine, are equally unjust to God and men, there being no other means of humbling us as we ought." <sup>2</sup>

The source of knowledge of this mystery of predestination is the Bible. Because the doctrine is there it must be heeded and studied. Calvin goes on to assert that we must ascribe both prescience and predestination to God, though the latter is in no way dependent on the former. God does not elect, nor does He reject men according to a foreknowledge of some merit or demerit. <sup>3</sup> Any motive of that sort would destroy the gratuitous character of election. <sup>4</sup>

Election has its origin in the good pleasure of God, which is sometimes described as His "mere good pleasure." <sup>5</sup> Yet in this is man's gain, for God thereby

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1. III, 21, 1

2. III, 21, 1

3. III, 22, 1

4. III, 22, iii

5. III, 22, 1, for example

places man's salvation in Himself alone. "It is owing entirely to his own mercy...that their salvation is his own work." <sup>1</sup> To turn to works is to turn to a lesser thing. "Since God places your salvation in himself alone, why should you descend to yourself? Since he assigns you his mercy alone, why will you recur to your own merits?" <sup>2</sup>

The problem which perplexed Fuller and his contemporaries, the relation of preaching, with its invitations to sinners, to the doctrine of election, Calvin touches upon in the same chapter 22 of Book III. He takes up the objection that God would be "inconsistent with himself, in inviting all without distinction while he elects only a few. Thus...the universality of the promise destroys the distinctions of special grace." <sup>3</sup> This objection he has already tried to meet. He is aware of the necessity of reconciling "the two things - viz. that by external preaching all are called to faith and repentance, and that yet the Spirit of faith and repentance is not given to all." <sup>4</sup> Something of the answer is in a question which he raises. "I would fain know....whether it is mere preaching or faith that makes men sons of God." <sup>5</sup>

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1. III, 22, vi

2. III, 22, vi

3. III, 22, x

4. III, 22, x

5. III, 22, x

Mere preaching, of course, is not the illuminating agency. Light is given by God and by God alone. "To God alone belongs the glory of freely illuminating those whom he had previously chosen." <sup>1</sup> With this, of course, Fuller is in whole-hearted agreement, though he expresses it a little differently. God is always the agent in man's calling. His Spirit employs various means to effect that purpose. "Free and solemn addresses, invitations, calls, and warnings....(are) not only consistent, but directly adapted, as means, in the hand of the Spirit of God, to bring them to Christ." <sup>2</sup>

In approaching the more difficult side of this doctrine, the Reprobation of those not elected to eternal life, it is important to see clearly the elements involved. Election and Reprobation are both related to two things: first, a hidden cause in God; and secondly, a manifest cause in man. In Election all the stress must of necessity be laid on the former, and, as we have seen, both Calvin and Fuller make that kind of emphasis. The Divine Will, inscrutable, yet altogether wise, is the grand cause of Election and the real ground of man's hope. The manifest cause, which is man's faith, cannot be emphasised

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1. III, 22, x

2. Fuller's Confession, VIII

without real danger of transforming the Gospel into a salvation by works, the works of faith. In Reprobation, however, the stress must be laid on man's unbelief and disobedience, not on a secret act of God.

This twofold teaching, which is so evident in Calvin, disappears from most of the 17th and 18th century Calvinists, and Reprobation is given a disproportionate place in their writings and Confessions of Faith. Gill, for example, said that Reprobation was no other than non-election. The Westminster Confession, Chapter III, paragraph 3, reads: "Some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death."

An interesting declaration of Faith, prepared in 1699 by the Baptist Church of Great Ellingham, Norfolk, hints at a distinction between the positive and negative aspects of Reprobation. The sixth article, "Of Reprobation," is as follows: "We believe that the Most High, according to his Sovereign will and pleasure, hath passed by a great part both of Angels and men with an Unchangeable purpose, not to pardon their sins nor bestow his saving grace upon them, and this is the Negative part of Reprobation: then for the positive part thereof, he determines to punish them Eternally, but yet Justly for their sins: Reprobation as well as Election, hath no cause but

the Sovereign good pleasure of God, with respect to the Negative part thereof but as the Active and Passive Obedience of Christ is ye Meritorious Cause of the Salvation of the Elect, Notwithstanding their Election, so the transgression and disobedience of the Reprobate is the Meritorious cause of their damnation." <sup>1</sup>

It no doubt seemed neat and tidy to the scholastic Calvinists of the 17th and 18th centuries to balance Election over against Reprobation, and place the total responsibility of the mysterious and inscrutable decision of God, but this does much less than justice to the complexities involved. Fuller's attempt to soften the harshness of the doctrine of Reprobation, as his contemporaries knew it, is an effort to present afresh the unbalance that exists. He speaks of a "divine determination to punish sin in certain cases in the person of the sinner." <sup>2</sup> In so doing he is laying emphasis on the manifest cause in man, rather than on the hidden cause in God.

Calvin wrote very fully on the theme of Reprobation, for he wished to meet all possible objections to this doctrine. In meeting them he points out that man has no justification for complaint. "As we are all vitiated

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1. The writer is indebted to the Rev. J. A. Smallbone, Baptist Minister of Wymondham, Norfolk, for an introduction to this Confession.
  2. Fuller's Confession, VIII

by sin, we cannot but be hateful to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty, but the strictest justice. But if all whom the Lord predestines to death are naturally liable to sentence of death, of what injustice, pray, do they complain?" <sup>1</sup> Again, he writes, "Every evil which they bear is inflicted by the most just judgment of God." <sup>2</sup> In these passages Calvin lays the emphasis for Reprobation on the manifest cause in man's unbelief and disobedience.

Fuller's theology bears many resemblances to that of John Calvin in its treatment of the related themes of Election and Reprobation, and so far as Reprobation is concerned restores something that had been lost for many years, the contrast between the hidden cause and the manifest cause. At this point Fuller cannot be denied his claim to be a genuine Calvinist.

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1. III, 23, iii

2. III, 23, ix

### 6. Covenant.

Before commencing any detailed comparison of Fuller and Calvin on this theme, it will be useful to outline some of the significant features of the Covenant Theology which developed after the time of Calvin, as an expression of his theology. A part of Fuller's thought bears clear traces of the form in which the Covenant Theology was expressed. The link between Fuller and the main exponents of the Covenant Theology is easily discerned. There is a succession from Fuller to Gill, from Gill to Witsius, and from Witsius to Cocceius. Gill knew the work of Witsius "De Oeconomia Foedorum Dei" before it was translated into English, and probably read it while in his teens.

Brine, slightly earlier than Gill, and also under the influence of the Federal Theology, was read by Fuller. In a Letter of 1784, presumably written to a Brother Minister, Fuller says: "I affirmed that eternal life (or blessedness) was promised in the covenant of works, and would have been enjoyed if Adam had obeyed, which I suppose inferable from Matthew 19, 16-17. And this Mr. Brine grants -- though he denies that the life promised in the Covenant of works was the same with that promised by the covenant of grace; yet he grants they were alike in dur-

ation consequently. Both were eternal life."<sup>1</sup>

W. Adams Brown describes the Covenant Theology in this way. "The Covenant Theology has a threefold significance. In the first place it is a theory of salvation; in the second place, it is a programme of conduct; in the third place, it is a philosophy of history."<sup>2</sup> It is the first two that chiefly require consideration for our purposes.

The Covenant Theology teaches that God has bound Himself to man by covenants. First there was the covenant of works, sometimes called the covenant of nature.<sup>3</sup> By this God entered into a pact with Adam as the head of the race, requiring from him perfect obedience, and promising eternal life as its reward, and threatening death for any disobedience. A positive command was given to Adam to refrain from eating of the fruit of a certain tree.

Man sinned, violating the Covenant of Works, and so brought upon himself and the race the unhappy consequences threatened against him. Yet the fall of man was "foreseen by God in eternity, and was ordained with a view to a more perfect and richer manifestation of the divine

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1. The Letter is in the John Rylands Library, Manchester.
  2. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IV, p. 219
  3. See Heppe, "Reformed Dogmatics," pp. 283 - 285

glory and grace, as well as to a richer blessing and a higher elevation of man by electing and redeeming grace." <sup>1</sup>

A covenant of grace was instituted whereby God chose to save a certain elected number for no reason other than His own wise and loving will. Heppe says: "The single ground of the covenant of grace is God's compassionate love for all men, and the free Trinitarian counsel of God." <sup>2</sup>

A larger expression of the same thought may be quoted from Witsius. "It pleased God according to the unsearchable riches of His wisdom to make this violation of the legal covenant subservient as an ἀφορμή and occasion for His own stupendous works. By instituting a new covenant of grace in which to display the surpassing treasures of His all-sufficiency much more clearly than if everything had fallen out happily for man in accordance with the former covenant; by thus revealing, just because it was incredible and ἀκατάληπτον, it appeared that the God of truth, righteousness and holiness could without diminution of these worshipful virtues, nay by their shining with far brighter light, become the God and the salvation of the sinner." <sup>3</sup>

Certain distinctions in the covenant of grace have

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1. Heppe's "Reformed Dogmatics," p. 303

2. Ibid. p. 384

3. Witsius "On the Covenants," II, 1, iii

to be made. There is the covenant of redemption, the agreement between the Father and the Son in the Godhead. This is immutable and unconditional. There is also the covenant of election, between God and the elect through Christ. This is conditional on faith, but faith is made possible only by the Spirit. The substance of the covenant of grace and its dispensation have to be carefully distinguished. Its substance is at all times the same, but the dispensation before and after the Advent of our Lord is to be noted carefully. The Protevangelium of Genesis 3, 15, is "renewed in many ways," says Heppe, "and finally by the sending of the Son."<sup>1</sup> The law, for example, has a purpose of evangelism, not legalism. Throughout the Old Testament are to be seen many types and symbols of this covenant of grace which is sealed by the death of Christ.

The covenant of grace, like the earlier covenant of nature, is associated with certain instructions which must be precisely and correctly obeyed, whether they are understood or not. Thus "the sacraments are signs and seals of the covenant of grace," and "it is essential that they should be rightly administered and that those only should be admitted to them who are really entitled

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1. Heppe's "Reformed Dogmatics," p. 389

to the privilege." <sup>1</sup> There is a similarity between the sacraments of the old dispensation and the new, for all signify the same substance, namely Christ and His benefits. Yet there are differences in the signs themselves, in their number, their scope, and their duration, and their clarity. What is required from man is submission to them as positive institutions. <sup>2</sup>

In the unfolding of the covenant various historical stages can be discerned. (i) Adam to Noah. (ii) Noah to Abraham. (iii) Abraham to Moses. (iv) Moses to David. (v) David to Christ. Different writers distinguish various periods in this fifth stage.

Most of this Federal Theology is a legitimate development of thoughts which are found in Calvin. In noticing how Andrew Fuller deals with the various themes, we shall try to associate them with their prime source in the writings of the Genevan Reformer. Fuller was not just an echo of the current Covenant Theology. If the form of his thought bears certain resemblances to it, the content is essentially in agreement with the thought of John Calvin.

All the themes of this Covenant Theology are found

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1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. IV, p. 218
  2. Fuller's distinction between positive and moral obligations has already been referred to, supra p. 134

in various parts of Fuller's writings. They are briefly expressed in Sections IV, IX, and X of the Kettering Confession of Faith. (The sacraments, the positive ordinances of Christ, are dealt with separately in Section XVI. A chapter of this work is devoted to them). In the first of these, Fuller makes a brief reference of the first purpose of creation, that relationship between God and man in which man loves God with all his heart. In Section IX he passes on to the covenant of grace, the "everlasting covenant" as he describes it. Some of his language seems a little quaint to us. Though man's disobedience and the Fall frustrated the original plan, these events "did not at all disconcert the Great Eternal." He was not taken unawares. He knew that this would happen, and had from eternity chosen a people to be His, since one man's disobedience would bring such calamitous consequences to all his descendants. This "everlasting covenant" is the grand purpose of the Godhead for mankind. "The Sacred Three, speaking after the manner of men, stipulated with each other for the bringing about their vast and glorious design." <sup>1</sup>

The details of the unfolding of the plan are given in the following Section. "First it was hinted to our

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1. Confession, Section IX

first parents, in the promise of the women's seed - then by the institution of sacrifices, by types, prophecies and promises, it was carried on through the Mosaic dispensation - at length the Son of God appeared - took our nature, obeyed the law and endured the curse, and hereby made full and proper atonement for the sins of his own elect - rose again from the dead - commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach his gospel - and then triumphantly ascended above all heavens, where he sitteth at the right hand of God, interceding for his people, and governing the world in subserviency to their welfare, till he shall come a second time to judge the world." <sup>1</sup>

This is a good summary of Fuller's belief. It can be illustrated from various parts of his writings. He is concerned to emphasise that it is the one plan of God that is unveiled in the whole Divine revelation. In his "Strictures on Sandemanianism" he says that "the law and the gospel are not in opposition to each other." <sup>2</sup> There may be differences in degree in both revelation and faith, but there is no difference in kind. In the Letter V on Systematic Divinity Fuller writes: "Both

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1. Confession, Section X

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 271

revelation and faith may exist in widely different degrees. Revelation was first given in obscure intimations, afterwards in types and shadows, in promises and in prophecies; and under each it was the office of faith to keep pace with it. The faith of Abel and that of Paul, though as to their nature and object the same, yet, as to degree, must have been widely different on account of the difference of the degrees of Divine revelation which each possessed." <sup>1</sup>

We find the same thing again in Letter IV of a series called "Thoughts on Preaching." Fuller writes about the composition of a sermon, and gives an illustration in terms of the words in the ninth verse of Psalm 36, "In thy light we shall see light." He offers some observations to illustrate "this important truth." <sup>2</sup> Among these observations is the following. "The true knowledge of God was obtained under the patriarchal or Mosaic dispensation by great numbers, but it was through the medium of revelation. As revelation increased the knowledge of God increased with it; prophecies, promises, and precepts; types and shadows....The true knowledge of God has obtained still more ground under the gospel dispensation; but it is still through the medium of revel-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 746

2. Ibid. p. 758

ation."<sup>1</sup>

The term "covenant" is used in two ways by Calvin and by Fuller. First, it refers to the everlasting purpose of grace, to what Calvin calls the "covenant of life."<sup>2</sup> This is its primary and proper meaning. The eternal Covenant (with a capital "C"), is unfolded in various stages through many other covenants, made at different times and with different persons. The second usage of the word is in connection with these other covenants, which are always to be understood as part of the unfolding of the great Covenant. We can see this in Fuller's Commentary on Genesis, where sections are devoted to the covenant with Noah and to the covenant with Abraham.

The covenant with Noah is called "this gracious design."<sup>3</sup> Three features of it are singled out for special mention. They are "the leading ideas suggested by a covenant."<sup>4</sup> First, it implies peace and goodwill between the parties. Secondly, sacrifice is involved as an atonement made by one of the parties for past offences. Thirdly, for the sake of one, God blesses the many. This is the principle on which God made His

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 758

2. III, 21, 1

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 360

4. Ibid. p. 360

covenant with Abraham and with David. "By these proceedings, God, even at this early period, was preparing the way for the redemption of his Son, by rendering the great principle on which it should proceed familiar to mankind....God's covenant stands fast with one, and many are blessed for his sake; their salvation is his reward." <sup>1</sup>

Discourse XXV of the same Commentary, dealing with the Abrahamic covenant, repeats many of these things. God's language to Abraham in proposing "to make a solemn covenant with him....denotes great kindness and condescension, with large designs of mercy." <sup>2</sup> These "designs of mercy" were not confined in their application to Abraham alone. His posterity would share in them, both in the material possessions such as the land of Canaan, and also in the spiritual possessions, the knowledge of God, "his lively oracles...his prophets...and his holy worship." <sup>3</sup>

Some comparisons may be made with Calvin's Commentary on these passages in Genesis. Calvin presses the point of the special character of the covenant with Noah only. "There is an understood antithesis, that the whole world being rejected, the Lord would establish a peculiar covenant with Noah alone." <sup>4</sup> When the covenant is con-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 361

2. Ibid. p. 377

3. Ibid. p. 377

4. Op. cit. p. 259

firmed a condition is conjoined. "His family shall be preserved for his sake." <sup>1</sup> This is emphasised again in dealing with Genesis 11. The sons of Noah can "hope for the best....because they are joined with their father.... It was the design of God to provide for all his posterity. It was not therefore a private covenant confirmed with one family only, but one which is common to all people, and which shall flourish in all ages to the end of the world." <sup>2</sup>

The twofold blessings of the covenant with Abraham, material and spiritual, are stressed by Calvin in his Commentary on Psalm 95. The giving of the land of Canaan was only a small portion of the blessings offered to the fathers. The covenant must not be limited to that for it "extended even to the hope of an eternal inheritance." <sup>3</sup> The former material inheritance, given to the Israelites as the chosen people, should have stirred them to a more lively faith in the promises of God, lifting their thoughts heavenwards.

The oneness of the covenant relation between God and man is specifically emphasised by Calvin in the Institutes. He writes: "The covenant made with all the fathers in so far from differing from ours in reality and substance....

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 259
  2. Commentary on Genesis, p. 297
  3. Op. cit. p. 179

is altogether one and the same: still the administration differs." <sup>1</sup>

A series of chapters in the Institutes works out this idea, and presents us with the same framework of thought which we have found in the later writer, Andrew Fuller. Moral Law and Ceremonial Law are both to be regarded as schoolmasters to bring men to Christ. "The Law was not superadded about four hundred years after the death of Abraham in order that it might lead the chosen people away from Christ, but, on the contrary, to keep them in suspense until his advent." <sup>2</sup> By the term "Law" Calvin means "the whole system of religion delivered by the hand of Moses." <sup>3</sup> Moses as Lawgiver reminded his people that they were under the free covenant made with their fathers. The ceremonies of the Law emphasise this.

Chapter 10 of the same Book II seeks further to establish the oneness of the revelation, proving that the old and new dispensations are in reality part of the one Covenant. Calvin opens with the statement that the preceding must have made it clear that all men whom God has chosen as His peculiar people "were taken into cov-

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1. II, 10, ii

2. II, 7, i

3. II, 7, i

enant with him on the same conditions." <sup>1</sup> Nevertheless he wishes to give a special place to considering it, not only for its own usefulness, but also because of "that monstrous miscreant Servetus, and some madmen of the sect of the Anabaptists." <sup>2</sup>

The unity of substance of the one Covenant is proved by three things. "First, that temporal opulence and felicity was not the goal to which the Jews were invited to aspire, but that they were admitted to the hope of immortality....Secondly, that the covenant by which they were reconciled to the Lord was founded...solely on the mercy of God....; and, thirdly, that they both had and knew Christ the Mediator." <sup>3</sup> The differences of administration are differences of degree, not of kind. The Old Testament exhibited "only the image of truth, while the reality was absent, the shadow instead of the substance." <sup>4</sup> Christ was thus typified in the ceremonies of the old dispensation.

All the subjects on which Fuller touches in relation to the appearing of the Son of God, His birth, His obedience, His endurance of the curse, His atonement, His death and His Resurrection, His Ascension, His heavenly

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1. II, 10, i

2. II, 10, i

3. II, 10, ii

4. II, 11, iv

intercession and His coming again, are treated by Calvin in chapter 16 of Book II. Christ has procured our salvation by His total obedience, but it is more particularly associated with His death. "Scripture, the more certainly to define the mode of salvation, ascribes it peculiarly and specially to the death of Christ." <sup>1</sup> The Philippian passage (Philippians 2, 5-11), which is at the back of Fuller's mind as he pens his Confession, is in the forefront of Calvin's, for he refers to it.

Though there are signs of the influence of the Federal Theology in Fuller's expression of his faith, it is clear that he deviated little from the genuine Calvinism of the Reformer.

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1. II, 16, v

### 7. Perseverance.

Fuller declares that "those who are effectually called....persevere in holiness till they arrive at endless happiness." <sup>1</sup> The holiness is not a cause of justification, but is necessary to final salvation. "Without it," he says, "no man shall see the Lord." <sup>1</sup>

In his Treatise on Antinomianism there is some further reference to the doctrine of final perseverance. He asserts that it, along with the doctrine of efficacious grace, humbles, because these two "imply the utter depravity of the human heart." <sup>2</sup> Yet there can be a danger if they are not treated reverently. "If the influence of either sin or grace be supposed to destroy our accountableness to God - if the necessity of regeneration be contended for on some other ground than our having been degenerate - if it consist not in the renewal of the mind to a right spirit, but in the communicating of a principle essentially different from anything to which we were obliged in our unregeneracy, or from that which we possessed in a state of original purity - if this principle and its opposite, the new and the old man, be considered as agents, and the man himself not

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1. Fuller's Confession, Section XIV

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 345

an agent, but a passive spectator of their conflicts - if a confident persuasion of our being the children of God be taken for Christian faith, and the apprehensions excited by a guilty conscience be treated as unbelief - finally, if perseverance be considered as a certain connexion between a beginning and an end, while an actual progress in grace and holiness is either denied or overlooked - it is easy to perceive what kind of effect will follow." <sup>1</sup>

It is plain that Fuller thinks of perseverance as belonging to the gracious, electing and sanctifying purposes of God. It is not a human capacity to continue which is underived from grace. This is made very plain in an early Letter, dated 3rd July 1788, and sent, probably, to Mr. Francis. "How great a matter is Christian perseverance, to hold out to the end and be saved! I have sometimes wondered at the grace in that astounding gradation, Jude 24, what 'Him' must be that is able to keep me from falling - and to present me - to present me faultless - faultless before the presence of his glory - and that with joy - yea with exceeding joy!" <sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless it may be expected that the Christian Minister will exhort his people to persevere in the way

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 345

2. The Letter is in the John Rylands Library, Manchester. (The emphases are Fuller's.)

of faith. In his Sermon at the funeral of John Sutcliff, Andrew Fuller speaks of the separation of Pastor and people in which he has gone to "give account of his ministry." <sup>1</sup> It will include "many things pertaining to the people of his charge." <sup>2</sup> Those who have entered into the truth "will be his joy and crown of rejoicing." <sup>3</sup> Could he have uttered his heart to them "it would have been to press upon you a perseverance in the things that you have received and learned." <sup>4</sup>

Fuller is aware that there may be difficulty for many in understanding the relationship between the grace of perseverance and responsible action following upon an exhortation. Part of the solution to this problem is to be found in stressing both. Replying to Philanthropos he discusses this matter. Philanthropos had said that God had determined the perseverance of all true believers. When any turned back because there had been no provision made for their perseverance, the offence was regarded as sin. Persons like Judas or Demas were sinful apostates, "under the Divine displeasure." <sup>5</sup> Fuller admits that these may look contradictory. Something of the problem

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 640

2. Ibid. p. 640

3. Ibid. p. 640

4. Ibid. p. 640

5. Ibid. p. 231

arises from the profundity of the subject. "Perhaps.... we shall never be fully able, in the present state, to explain the link that unites the appointments of God with the free actions of men; but such a link there is: the fact is revealed abundantly in Scripture, and it does not distress me, if in this matter I have, all my life, to walk by faith and not by sight." <sup>1</sup>

It is characteristic of Calvin and of Calvinism, as we have seen more than once, to settle the unresolved contradiction by an appeal to revelation and to the will of God, and this argument of Fuller is typical of him and of the Calvinism which he expounds.

When we turn to John Calvin we find that he puts things quite bluntly, saying "Perseverance is the gift of God." <sup>2</sup> The only reason why some persevere and others do not is the good pleasure of God. There is no further explanation that can be given of the difference between them. Some He strengthens; some He does not strengthen; and it is of His good pleasure to do the one or the other.

Calvin uses the phrase "the gift of perseverance" <sup>3</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 231

2. Institutes, II, 5, iii

3. III, 24, vi

elsewhere. His argument is that our election is confirmed by our calling. Yet by experience men learn that without perseverance faith and calling are not of much value. Christ's promises give the needed confidence that those who have their "root in God can never be deprived of their salvation....'He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'" (Phil. 1, 6) <sup>1</sup>

In Fuller's account of "Calvinism" in the composite volume "Views of Religion," he singles out perseverance as one of the five significant points of Calvin's system, and he writes: "Those whom God has effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, shall never finally fall from a state of grace. They admit that true believers may fall partially and awfully; and would fall totally and finally but for the mercy and faithfulness of God, who keepeth the feet of his saints: also, that he who bestoweth the grace of perseverance, bestoweth it by means of reading and hearing the word, meditation, exhortations, threatenings, and promises: but that none of these things imply the possibility of a believer's falling from a state of justification, into Perdition." <sup>2</sup>

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1. Institutes, III, 24, vi

2. Hannah Adams' "Views of Religion," p. 68

A footnote draws attention to Calvin's Institutes, II, 5, iii and iv, and to the Acts of the Synod of Dort.<sup>1</sup>

It is clear that Fuller is never far from Calvin in his exposition of this small part of his creed.

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1. Acta Synodi, pp. 265 - 268

### 8. The Sacraments.

Andrew Fuller and John Calvin offer interesting points of agreement, as well as a number of considerable disagreements, in their treatment of the sacraments.

The word "sacrament" is never used by Fuller. He speaks of the "ordinances." We find the word in his Confession,<sup>1</sup> and in many of his works. In a short piece called "Strictures," which deals with a pamphlet written by the Rev. John Carter, and called "Thoughts on Baptism and mixed Communion, in three letters to a friend; in which some animadversions are made on the Rev. Abraham Booth's Apology," Fuller argues against mixed communion, that is a communion of Baptists and Paedobaptists. He commends the brotherly affection in Mr. Carter's writing, for he had pleaded for mutual recognition and therefore common fellowship at the Lord's Table. Fuller regrets the "wall of separation,"<sup>2</sup> and wishes it could be removed, but "without our dispensing with an ordinance of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

Fuller wrote a Letter, dated September 21st 1800, to William Ward, one of the Missionaries at Serampore,

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1. Section XVI

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 853

3. Ibid. p. 853

expressing "Thoughts on Open Communion." He stresses the place of baptism in the primitive Church, and uses the words, "the importance of this ordinance."<sup>1</sup> He cannot consider the omission of baptism (by immersion as a believer), as a condition of receiving the Lord's Supper. "To dispense with baptism as a term of visible communion, is to connive either at a total neglect of the ordinance which by the authority of Christ is binding to the end of the world, or at a gross corruption of that ordinance."<sup>2</sup> (The phrase "a gross corruption of the ordinance" appears again later in the same Letter).

A posthumously published letter of Andrew Fuller on "The Admission of Unbaptized Persons to the Lord's Supper," uses the word "ordinance" frequently. "The mind of Christ relative to this ordinance;"<sup>3</sup> "essential to the ordinance;"<sup>4</sup> "the two ordinances;"<sup>5</sup> "all the ordinances and commandments;"<sup>6</sup> "baptism is....Divine ordinance;"<sup>7</sup> "the connexion between the two ordinances;"<sup>8</sup> "the two ordinances were connected."<sup>9</sup>

In Fuller's "Thoughts on the Principles on which

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 854

2. Ibid. p. 854

3. Ibid. p. 856

4. Ibid. p. 856

5. Ibid. p. 857

6. Ibid. p. 857

7. Ibid. p. 857

8. Ibid. p. 857

9. Ibid. p. 858

the Apostles proceeded in forming and organizing Christian Churches, and regulating various religious duties," the thoughts of his Confession are plainly repeated. "There are some things pertaining to the Christian Church which are entirely positive.<sup>1</sup>...Such are baptism and the Lord's Supper. They were 'ordinances' of God, and required to be kept 'as they were delivered.'" <sup>2</sup> In a Circular Letter of 1807, Andrew Fuller again lays emphasis on the distinction between positive and moral obedience, and includes baptism and the Lord's Supper as positive ordinances of Christ. <sup>3</sup>

John Calvin, on the other hand, speaks continually of baptism and the Lord's Supper as "sacraments." <sup>4</sup> He stresses their character as instituted by Christ. "My present purpose is to discourse especially of those sacraments which the Lord has been pleased to institute as ordinary sacraments in his Church." <sup>5</sup> Fuller's notion of them as "positive" ordinances, associated with the will of God, and therefore to be accepted, can be seen in words of Calvin such as the following: "It may be justly said, that such sacraments are ceremonies, by

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1. See supra p. 134 for the distinction between "positive" and "moral" obligations.
  2. Fuller's "Works," p. 831
  3. Ibid. p. 734
  4. Institutes, IV, 14 and following
  5. IV, 14, xix

which God is pleased to train his people, first to excite, cherish, and strengthen faith within; and, secondly, to testify our religion to men." <sup>1</sup> He goes on in paragraph xx of the same chapter to say: "These (that is, the sacraments) have been different at different times, according to the dispensation which the Lord has seen meet to employ in manifesting himself to men." <sup>2</sup> This is not unlike the remark of Fuller about the ordinances of the gospel day.

It is very clear, however, from Calvin's writings that he did not regard the sacraments as merely a fiat of the Divine will. Their purpose for believers God has made plain, so that in them "the paternal kindness of God, and the graces of the Spirit are offered us in Christ." <sup>3</sup> Fuller seems to suggest that (blind) obedience is all that is required. Calvin says that the obedience is a recognition of the merciful appointments of God whereby the succour of grace is given to the needy soul. Men "bring nothing of their own, but simply beg" <sup>4</sup> in coming to receive the sacraments which God has appointed for men.

In Calvin's Catechism of the Church of Geneva we

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1. IV, 14, xix  
3. IV, 14, xxvi

2. IV, 14, xx  
4. IV, 14, xxvi

are given a definition of a sacrament. It is "an outward attestation of the divine benevolence towards us, which represents spiritual grace symbolically, to seal the promises of God in our hearts, by which the truth of them is better confirmed." <sup>1</sup> The visible sign, however, does not have power or virtue merely in itself, but only through the will of God Who has instituted it for this purpose. "The power and efficacy of a sacrament" do not "lie in the external element," <sup>2</sup> but emanate wholly from the Spirit of God. "It pleased God to exercise his virtue through his instruments....And this indeed he does, so as in no way to detract from the virtue of his Spirit." <sup>3</sup> The good pleasure of God in this appointment of the sacraments is in accord with human needs. We are not pure spirit, but psycho-physical, and therefore need signs and "symbols or mirrors." <sup>4</sup> Hence it is a serious offence for anyone to spurn them, reckoning himself able to do without them. That is equivalent to holding Christ in contempt, rejecting His grace, and quenching the Spirit.

In comparing the beliefs of the two men about the

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1. Calvin: Theological Treatises, (Ed. J.K.S.Reid), p.131

2. Ibid. p. 131

3. Ibid. p. 131

4. Ibid. p. 131

first sacrament, Baptism, a variety of differences is very soon apparent. They disagree about the form of baptism, and about the subject of baptism, though they have some interesting things in common when dealing with the content of baptism. Some attention must be given to each of these.

Calvin is very open-minded about the form of baptism. The primitive form is without doubt immersion, as the word βαπτίζω indicates, but variations in the form are permissible according to the various climates in which the Church works. "Whether the person baptized is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence: churches should be at liberty to adopt either, according to the diversity of climates, although it is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller will allow none of this latitude. "I believe it essential to Christian Baptism that it be by immersion, or burying the person in water." <sup>2</sup> In his Journal, quoted by his son, he tells of the first occas-

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1. IV, 15, xix

2. Confession, Section XVI

ion of seeing the baptism of a believer. "In March, 1770, I witnessed the baptizing of two young persons, having never seen that ordinance <sup>1</sup> administered before and was considerably affected by what I saw and heard. The solemn immersion of a person, on a profession of faith in Christ, carried such a conviction with it that I wept like a child on the occasion....I was fully persuaded that this was the primitive way of baptizing, and that every Christian was bound to attend to this institution of our blessed Lord." <sup>2</sup> That point of view is consistently expressed in all Fuller's writings on this subject.

In his Circular Letter of 1802 Fuller writes on "The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism." Since this Letter is directed to Baptist Churches there are certain things which the author assumes he can take for granted. These include "that Christian baptism is properly administered only by immersion," <sup>3</sup> and that it is only for "those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ." <sup>4</sup> Echoes of the words of the Kettering Confession are to be found in this same Circular Letter for he declares that "Baptism is a Divine institution, pertaining to the king-

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1. We may again note the term "ordinance."
  2. "Memoirs of Mr. Fuller," by A. G. Fuller, p. xix
  3. Fuller's "Works," p. 728
  4. Ibid. p. 728

dom of the Messiah, or the gospel dispensation." <sup>1</sup>

In Fuller's "Strictures," to which reference has already been made, he will not permit the possibility of mutual recognition of the forms of baptism used by Baptists and Paedobaptists. He suggests that the controversy on mixed communion can be reduced to three questions, the second of which is this: "Is a being immersed on a profession of faith necessary to baptism?" <sup>2</sup> He goes on to add this comment. "The denial of the second is ground proper for Paedobaptists. But if they make it good against the Baptists, they convict them of error as Baptists rather than as strict Baptists." <sup>3</sup>

In a Letter to the Editor of the Instructor, dated January 28th 1844, Andrew Fuller quotes a letter from Dr. Worcester to Dr. Baldwin. The purpose of Dr. Worcester's letter was to plead for "a free communion between Baptists and Paedobaptists." <sup>4</sup> Dr. Worcester recognised, however, that certain beliefs might make the plea in vain. "'If professed believers are the only proper subjects for baptism, and if immersion be not a mere circumstance or mode of baptism, but essential to the ordinance, so that he who is not immersed is not baptized, the sentiment of

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 728

2. Ibid. p. 853

3. Ibid. p. 853

4. Ibid. p. 855

strict communion would be sufficiently established." <sup>1</sup>  
 On this Fuller remarks: "Dr. Worcester's premises are  
 our most decided principles." <sup>2</sup>

It will be most convenient at this point to consider also the differences between Calvin and Fuller on the subject of baptism, the person to receive this sacrament. Some of the above quotations establish clearly enough what was Fuller's position, that baptism is "properly administered only...to those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ." <sup>3</sup> He seeks to establish this as the primitive practice. "As many as were baptized in the primitive ages were voluntary agents, and submitted to this ordinance for the purpose of making a solemn and practical profession of the Christian faith." <sup>4</sup>

The phrase "believers' baptism" is used on a number of occasions in this same Circular Letter from which these quotations are taken. The validity of infant baptism Fuller will not concede for a moment. In his "Strictures" he addresses the Rev. John Carter and says, "Yes, sir, in our judgement you are unbaptized." <sup>5</sup> This emphasis is

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 855

2. Ibid. p. 855

3. Ibid. p. 728

4. Ibid. p. 728

5. Ibid. p. 853

made in various places, sometimes to repudiate the term Anabaptist as applied to himself and like-minded believers. In any admission of the validity of infant baptism there would be the necessity to relinquish "not merely my practice of strict communion, but my principles as a Baptist, or, if you please, as an Antipaedobaptist, and either refuse to baptize any in future who have been sprinkled in their infancy, which the far greater part have been, or, when I do so, be guilty of rebaptizing them, and thus become in reality, what I have hitherto disowned with abhorrence, an Anabaptist." <sup>1</sup> The name "Anabaptist" was frequently applied in earlier days to those of the Baptist persuasion, and they sought in every way possible to repudiate it. We have already noticed <sup>2</sup> that John Wesley had the bad habit of calling Baptists "Anabaptists." We may understand some of the vigour of Fuller's language in remembering these facts. "If infant baptism is valid, it ought not to be repeated; and he that repeats it is, what his opponents have been used to call him, an Anabaptist." <sup>3</sup>

Calvin's arguments in favour of Paedobaptism need not be followed in detail. They are given extensively

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 853

2. Supra p. 36

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 856

in the Institutes, <sup>1</sup> and elsewhere in his writings, particularly in the Commentaries. His argument has in mind the Anabaptist disturbances. "Since...certain frenzied spirits have raised...great disturbance...on account of paedobaptism, I cannot avoid here...adding something to restrain their frenzy." <sup>2</sup> He mentions the main course of the contrary argument, that paedobaptism "is not founded on the institution of God, but was introduced merely by human presumption and depraved curiosity, and afterwards, by a foolish facility, rashly received in practice." <sup>3</sup> The substance of Calvin's answer to this is an enquiry into "the nature and efficacy of baptism, as evinced by the promises therein given." <sup>4</sup> He develops this in terms of an analogy between baptism and circumcision, <sup>5</sup> and supports it by reference to the Abrahamic covenant, <sup>6</sup> and our Lord's receiving and blessing the children. <sup>7</sup> The benefits to parents and to children are mentioned. <sup>8</sup> The second part of the 16th chapter of the Fourth Book is given to meeting the arguments of those who reject infant baptism.

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1. IV, 16

3. IV, 16, i

5. IV, 16, iii, iv, v

7. IV, 16, vii

2. IV, 16, i

4. IV, 16, ii

6. IV, 16, vi

8. IV, 16, ix

Fuller has a long footnote in his Commentary on Genesis, dealing with the analogy between baptism and circumcision. He does not wish to deny that spiritual blessings were promised in a general way to the natural offspring of Abraham. "The children of the promise," however, are not all the elect, but only those from among the Jews. Fuller finds it difficult to see how it can follow from this promise that God will make a people for Himself from the natural descendants of believers. Yet even if it were granted that God's blessing to Abraham and his seed included the natural children of believers, the blessing is not in terms of natural descent. Not even the natural posterity of Abraham were privileged in this way. "Nor do I see how it follows hence that we are warranted to baptize them in their infancy. Abraham, it is true was commanded to circumcize his male children; and if we had been commanded to baptize our males, or females, or both, or any example of the kind had been left in the New Testament, we should be as much obliged to comply in the one case as he was in the other. But we do not think ourselves warranted to reason from circumcision to baptism; from the circumcision of males to the baptism of males and females; and from the circumcision of the children of a nation, (the greater part of whom were unbelievers), and of 'servants

born in the house or bought with money,' to the baptism of the children of believers. In short, we do not think ourselves warranted, in matters of positive institution, to found our practice on analogies, whether real or supposed; and still less on one so circuitous, dissonant, and uncertain as that in question. Our duty, we conceive, is, in such cases, to follow the precepts and examples of the dispensation under which we live." <sup>1</sup>

R. S. Wallace in his book "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," admits that at times Calvin seems to attribute "a sacramental value to natural propagation within the Church, basing his authority for this on the promise given to Abraham." <sup>2</sup> He adds that the practical difficulties of such a position are admitted by Calvin, for he knows that many who are baptized never believe. Nevertheless, to be born within the life of the Church is a great privilege, for it means a nearness to Christ, and therefore deserves the sign and seal of baptism.

The content of baptism is explicitly interpreted for their readers both by Andrew Fuller and by John Cal-

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 377 - 378

2. Op. cit. p. 193

vin, and there are some interesting parallels to be found as the beliefs of the two men are traced. Following on the very real differences so far noted these are all the more striking.

Calvin begins his chapter of the Institutes on the subject of baptism <sup>1</sup> with these words. "Baptism is the initiatory sign by which we are admitted to the fellowship of the Church, that being ingrafted into Christ we may be accounted children of God. Moreover, the end for which God has given it...is first, that it may be conducive to faith in him; and secondly, that it may serve the purpose of a confession among men." <sup>2</sup>

Many of these things are repeated by Fuller in his own way. "The nature and design of baptism," he writes in the Letter which William Newman published posthumously, "shows it to have been the initiatory ordinance of Christianity." <sup>3</sup> It is an oath of allegiance to the King of Zion. <sup>4</sup> What is said in words about repentance towards God and faith in Christ is declared in action in baptism. He goes on to add that baptism is in the name of the Sacred Three, and that to relinquish belief in the Trinity is in effect to relinquish our baptism. Calvin also insists on the threefold name in baptism. <sup>5</sup>

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1. IV, 15

2. IV, 15, 1

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 857

4. Ibid. p. 728

5. IV, 15, vi

The two writers both make use of the imagery of putting on military dress in describing baptism. Calvin will not permit baptism to be thought of as merely a profession of faith "in the same way as soldiers attest their profession by wearing the insignia of their commander." <sup>1</sup> Yet he certainly does allow this to be part of baptism. "As by that military oath recruits bind themselves to be faithful to their commander, and make a profession of military service; so by our signs we acknowledge Christ to be our commander, and declare that we serve under his standard." <sup>2</sup> Fuller develops this thought in his Letter. If a man wishes to join the army he must first take an oath of loyalty. "Baptism is that Divine ordinance by which we are said to put on Christ, as the king's livery is put on by those who enter his service." <sup>3</sup>

Calvin continues by stating that there are three things contributed to our faith by baptism. First, it attests the forgiveness of sins. It is "a sign and evidence of our purification." <sup>4</sup> In quoting the Scriptures to support this, (in particular Ephesians 5, 25-26, "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that

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1. IV, 15, 1

2. IV, 14, xiii

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 857

4. IV, 15, 1

he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word;" Titus 3, 5, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" and I Peter 3, 21, "baptism also doth now save us,") he hastens to add that there is no virtue in the water itself. "The only purification which baptism promises is by means of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who is figured by water from the resemblance to cleansing and washing." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller follows this line of argument quite closely. By immersion in water there is the symbolism of cleansing. In this act is a profession of faith in Christ by whose shed blood there is the remission of sins. There is not, however, some virtue "in the element, whatever be the quantity; nor in the ceremony, though of Divine appointment: but it contains a sign of the way in which we must be saved....The sign, when rightly used, leads to the thing signified." <sup>2</sup>

It is some help in seeing the similarities of expression and thought to set these things out in parallel columns, with common words and phrases underlined.

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1. IV, 15, ii

2. Fuller's "Works," p. 728

Fuller

"The immersion of the body in water, which is a purifying element, contains a profession of our faith in Christ through the shedding of whose blood we are cleansed from all sin. Hence baptism in the name of Christ is said to be for the remission of sins. Not that there is any such virtue in the element, whatever be the quantity; nor in the ceremony, though of Divine appointment: but it contains a sign of the way in which we must be saved....Remission of sins is ascribed by Peter not properly to baptism, but to the name in which the parties were to be baptized....'Baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." 1

Calvin

"Baptism...is a sign and evidence of purification. It is his will that all who have believed be baptized for the remission of sins.... Peter....says that 'baptism also doth now save us.' He did not mean to intimate that our ab-lution and salvation are perfected by water, or that water possesses in itself the virtue of purifying, regenerating, and renewing; nor does he mean that it is the cause of salvation, but only that the knowledge and certainty of such gifts are preceived in this sacrament....Bap-tism is 'not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, which is of faith.' The only purification which baptism promises is by means of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, who is figured by water from the resemblance to cleansing and washing. Who, then, can say that we are cleansed by that water which certainly attests that the blood of Christ is our true and only laver? So that we cannot have a better argument to refute the hallucination of those who ascribe the whole to

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 728 - 729

Calvin

the virtue of water than we derive from the very meaning of baptism, which leads us away as well from the visible element which is presented to our eye... that it may fix our minds on Christ alone." 1

The second benefit of Baptism, according to Calvin, is that "it shows our mortification in Christ and new life in him." 2 He quotes Romans 6, 3-4. "Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Motives and exhortations for Christian living are to be found in this fact.

Fuller makes large use of the resemblance between baptism by immersion and the death and resurrection of our Lord. "The resemblance of baptism by immersion to the death and resurrection of Christ, and the suitableness of the one to signify our faith in the other, are manifest. It is thus that baptism does now save us....affording a sign of our salvation by the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ." 3 He also quotes Romans 6, 3-4,

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1. IV, 15, i, ii

2. IV, 15, v

3. Fuller's "Works," p. 729

and draws from these verses motives for Christian living. Since Christ died for sin we must die to it, for our baptism is in the likeness of His death. We must be separated from the world and its ways, for that is implied by death and burial. This idea of separation is not to be treated simply in individualistic terms. Baptism draws "a line of distinction between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan," <sup>1</sup> It sets a boundary to visible Christianity. If it were properly regarded it would save the unhappy confusion of the Church with the world, so that people can become members of the Church in terms of birth and not in terms of faith. Death implies separation, but the resurrection means a new life, being alive to God. There can be no returning to the former ways, for that would be like the living taking up residence in a sepulchre.

R. S. Wallace works out in some detail Calvin's idea of "Baptism as a sign of our separation from the world to God," <sup>2</sup> and says that for the Reformer the Church was "differentiated from the world by the sign of Baptism." <sup>3</sup>

Calvin's third point is not as clearly distinguished from the other two as one would wish. He says: "The

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 729

2. This is the title of Section 4 of Chapter XIV of Mr. Wallace's book, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," pp. 181 - 183

3. Ibid. p. 181

last advantage which our faith receives from baptism is its assuring us not only that we are ingrafted into the death and life of Christ, but so united to Christ himself as to be partakers of all his blessings." <sup>1</sup> This is more a continuation of the thought of the second benefit, with particular stress on union with Christ in His Resurrection, than a separate thought. As we have seen, it receives its place in Fuller's theology in the special emphasis he gives to the new life in Christ to which we are joined by a baptism which is the likeness of a death and resurrection.

Fuller concludes his Circular Letter on this subject with a word of warning about baptism becoming an idol. It is no substitute for holiness and righteousness and godliness. Baptism is a means of grace, but to rest in the means is to deceive oneself. This same thought is evident in Calvin too. "God uses the means and instruments which he sees to be expedient, in order that all things may be subservient to his glory....He spiritually nourishes our faith by means of the sacraments, whose only office is to make his promises visible to our eye, or rather to be the pledge of his promises. And as it is our duty in regard to the other creatures which the

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1. IV, 15, vi

divine liberality and kindness has destined for our use, and by whose instrumentality he bestows the gifts of his goodness upon us, to put no confidence in them, nor to admire and extol them as the causes of our mercies; so neither ought our confidence to be fixed on the sacraments, nor ought the glory of God to be transferred to them, but passing beyond them all, our faith and confession should rise to him who is the Author of the sacraments and of all things." <sup>1</sup>

When we turn to the other "ordinance of the King of Zion," to use Fuller's phrase, we find that he has very little to say on the subject. Not even when one might expect him to move easily to this topic, for example in sermons on communion with God, or on the social aspects of religion, or in passages where the word "bread" appears, does he attempt to say anything about the content of this sacrament. Some of the more remarkable examples may be quoted.

In a short work called "On Laying the Foundation of a New Chapel," Fuller speaks of the constant necessity in the Christian life of coming to Christ. "That which food is to the body, the doctrine of Christ crucified is to the

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1. IV, 14, xii

mind. 'Except we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we have no life in us.'" <sup>1</sup>

In Dr. Ryland's Memoirs of Fuller a Letter is quoted in which these words appear: "I see and feel more and more, that except I eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, I have no life in me, either as a Christian or as a minister." <sup>2</sup> It is curious that such references should be in no way linked to a doctrine of Holy Communion.

In a series of Essays on "Spiritual Declension and Means of Revival," Fuller makes this statement. "Christ is a believer's life; the bread of life, the water of life, the tree of life, the vine that communicates life to the branches. Each of these metaphors implies that we cannot live at all spiritually without union to him; so neither can we be lively and fruitful, without close communion with him." <sup>3</sup> Even here the references to the bread and the vine and the need for a close communion with Christ do not suggest a comment about the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Fuller's sole concern, apart from one very brief

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1. "Miscellaneous Pieces," edited by J. W. Morris, p. 280
  2. Op. cit. p. 501
  3. Fuller's "Works," p. 911

reference, is with the persons receiving Communion, whether they should be infants or adults, and whether baptism by immersion is a pre-requisite for the latter. To Fuller's mind infant communion is impossible because there is no faith. He elaborates on this in his piece "On Terms of Communion," which offers some remarks on infant baptism and infant communion in reply to papers written by the Rev. S. Newton of Norwich. <sup>1</sup>

Mixed communion, and open communion are equally impossible to Fuller's mind. The question of open communion was one which he had faced very early in his Christian life. Before he became Pastor of the Soham Church a controversy took place on this subject. Mr. Robinson of Cambridge and several other Baptist Ministers wrote in favour of open communion. Andrew Fuller wrote some "pages in defence of Strict Communion in which he endeavoured to meet the objections of the opponent party." <sup>2</sup> Morris, who gives this information, says that the manuscript was not conclusive on the point in question, but contained some signs of acute discernment. The argument of this early piece was developed in later writings on the subject. Morris says that Fuller "wrote some re-

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 852

2. "Memoirs of Fuller" by J. W. Morris, p. 30

flections on a small pamphlet published by Mr. Browne of Kettering, and on another by Mr. Robinson of Cambridge." <sup>1</sup>

Fuller puts his objections to open communion very plainly in his "Strictures," when he reduces the controversy to three questions. "(1) Is baptism necessary to communion at the Lord's table?" He says that it is. "(2) Is a being immersed on a profession of faith necessary to baptism?" Again the answer is in the affirmative. "(3) On whom does the duty of judging what is baptism devolve - on the party baptized, or on the church, or on both?" He says that it is both. Hence "the strict communion of the Baptists seems to be right." <sup>2</sup>

Andrew Fuller returns to this topic in a Letter to William Ward of Serampore, in which he answers a question of Ward, "Do not the bonds of Scriptural communion extend to all who are real Christians, except their practice is immoral, or they have embraced dangerous heresies?" Fuller's reply is a quite blunt No. To do so would be to connive at a "gross corruption of the ordinance of Christ." <sup>3</sup>

In a Letter to the Editor of The Instructor Fuller stresses this point in another way. "I give....the fullest credit for desiring as Christians to be in fellow-

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1. "Memoirs of Fuller," by J. W. Morris, p. 331
  2. Fuller's "Works," pp. 853 - 854
  3. Ibid. p. 854

ship with us, and with all other Christians; and this also is our desire, as much as it is theirs. But as paedobaptists, do they wish us to admit them to communion without acknowledging the validity of their baptism? This is the question; and from all that I have read of their writings on the subject, however they may complain of Strict Communion they cannot answer in the affirmative." <sup>1</sup>

The way to the Lord's Table is by the baptistry where the believer is immersed.

There is a section in his "Strictures on Sandemanianism in which Fuller writes about the frequency of communion. He turns to the words of institution, "As often as ye eat," and says that they do not determine how often, but the terms indicate some frequency. He concludes his argument by saying, "The truth appears to be that the Lord's supper ought to be frequently celebrated; but the exact time of it is a circumstance which does not belong to the ordinance itself." <sup>2</sup>

This point is also made in a Letter of 16th February 1808. Fuller says that the time for celebrating the Lord's Supper is undetermined, "only that it be often..."

Mr. M'L. and Mr. J. Haldane deny that I Cors. 11, 26,

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1. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.
  2. Fuller's "Works," p. 289

proves that it ought to be often, and that if it be not weekly, it might as well be only once a year, or in seven years. But I have endeavoured to prove that the comparative always supposes the positive; or that the phrase as often as, which goes to determine the frequency of a thing by some other thing, supposes both to be frequent....It would not be said as oft, if it were not oft." <sup>1</sup>

Another Letter, of 25th February 1804, touches on the person who may administer this sacrament. Fuller has no objection to an elder doing this, but he should be ordained, if possible, and this done by the laying on of hands.

The only definite reference to the meaning of this sacrament, which Andrew Fuller always calls "the Lord's Supper, is in one of his series of comments on "Apparent Contradictions" in the Bible. <sup>2</sup> "In the Lord's Supper," he says in the last of these, "we hold professed communion with Christ." <sup>3</sup>

Such meagre evidence as this for Fuller's beliefs about this sacrament affords little help in a comparison with the teaching of John Calvin. The only positive

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1. The Letter is in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford.

2. Fuller's "Works," pp. 529 - 537

3. Ibid. p. 537

item in Fuller's doctrine is the general statement in this last quotation.

There is much in Calvin that is in agreement with such a generalisation. In his "Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ" he explicitly refers to "the sacrament of the Supper" as a means by which "our Lord leads us to communion with Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> More usually Calvin speaks of "the communion of his body and blood,"<sup>2</sup> for, as R.S. Wallace says, "this communion can be ours only through participation in His flesh."<sup>3</sup> The whole chapter bears the title, "The Lord's Supper as Communion with Christ."<sup>4</sup>

Fuller's emphasis on the pre-requisite of faith is abundantly plain in Calvin. "I deny that men carry away more from the sacrament than they collect in the vessel of faith."<sup>5</sup> In his Catechism of the Church of Geneva there is the following question and answer.

"M: How and when does the effect follow the use of the sacraments?"

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1. Calvin: Theological Treatises, (Ed. J.K.S. Reid), p. 144
  2. Ibid. pp. 144, 146, 147, 148; Catechism of the Church of Geneva, (Calvin: Theological Treatises), p. 135
  3. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament," p. 200
  4. Ibid. pp. 197 - 216
  5. Institutes, IV, 17, xxxiii

"C: When we receive them by faith, seeking in them Christ alone and his grace." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin also emphasises the need of frequent communication. "What we have hitherto said of the sacrament, abundantly shows that it was not instituted to be received once-a-year and that perfunctorily." <sup>2</sup> In his "Treatise on the Lord's Supper" he discusses this, saying that we ought to make more use of it since it is God's remedy "to assist our frailty, to fortify our faith, to augment our charity, and to further us in all sanctity of life." <sup>3</sup> Further on he writes: "The custom ought to be well established in all Churches, of celebrating the Supper as frequently as the capacity of the people will allow... Though we have no express command defining the time and the day, it should be enough for us to know that the intention of our Lord is that we use it often." <sup>4</sup>

Though Calvin and Fuller disagree profoundly about the recipients of baptism, the Genevan no more than the other considers favourably the idea of an unbaptized person receiving this sacrament. "Baptism is the initiatory sign by which we are admitted to the fellowship of

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1. Calvin: Theological Treatises, p. 132
  2. Institutes, IV, 17, xlv
  3. Calvin: Theological Treatises, p. 152
  4. Ibid. p. 153

the Church," <sup>1</sup> he declares, and it is only to those within the fellowship of the Church that the second sacrament is offered.

A section of Chapter 16 of Book IV of the Institutes is given to dealing with the subject of infant communion. Calvin will have none of it. "The Supper is intended for those of riper years, who, having passed the tender period of infancy are fit to bear solid food." <sup>2</sup> The evidence of the Scriptures is quite clear. "Let a man examine himself," says St. Paul, but how can an infant do this? The phrase "discerning the Lord's body" implies what is impossible for an infant. The injunction of our Lord is plain. "Do this in remembrance of me." But infants are not able to remember something of which they have never learned.

The conclusion to be drawn from these considerations is a more qualified one than usual hitherto. Andrew Fuller may be said to be a Calvinist up to a point, but it is not easy to fix that point. Though there are some agreements, there are also some considerable disagreements. It is probable that these would have been more obvious if Andrew Fuller had expounded his doctrine of Holy Communion. His denomination has always been inclined to adopt

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1. Institutes, IV, 15, i

2. IV, 16, xxx

a Zwinglian interpretation of this sacrament, and it is not unreasonable to think that such a position was that of Fuller. His failure to move on from references to "bread" and "eating the flesh and drinking the blood" to some comment on this sacrament would confirm that.

Perhaps the best conclusion to make is a simple general statement that there are certain interesting similarities in the writings of the two men.

### 9. Eternal Life.

Fuller devotes the last three Sections of his Confession to eschatology. It is convenient to look first at Section XVIII before turning to the others and their themes. He begins with the statement that "the soul of man is created immortal." This is no isolated comment. In his "Apology for Christian Missions," he deals with some remarks of Major Scott Waring, who had strongly criticized the work of the Mission. One criticism was that unless all India were converted, nothing much would in effect be done. In answer Fuller says that "he should consider, however, that we believe in the immortality of the soul." <sup>1</sup> In the Concluding Reflections on "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation," he reminds his readers that God "hath stamped immortality upon your natures." <sup>2</sup>

Calvin has numerous references to the immortality of the soul. He writes to say that he wishes to deal with those who are inclined to use "the frigid doctrine of Aristotle...for the purpose...of disproving the immortality of the soul." <sup>3</sup> A little later he speaks of "a stamp of immortality." <sup>4</sup> In dealing with the nature of

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 809

2. Ibid. p. 176

3. Institutes, I, 5, v

4. I, 5, v

man he declares: "There can be no question that man consists of a body and a soul; meaning by soul, an immortal though created essence." <sup>1</sup> Calvin, of course, is very careful to stress that this immortality of the soul in no way makes man independent of God. The immortality is a given one. The soul is immortal by grace, and in the good pleasure of God that grace could be taken away and the soul vanish.

Dr. Heinrich Quistorp has a long chapter on "The Immortality of the Soul" in his study of "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things." He explains why Calvin devoted his first theological work, "Psychopannychia," to this subject. There were various people who took a contrary point of view, and he sought to deal with what he regarded as dangerous heresy. "Wherever the question of the immortality of the soul emerges Calvin becomes animated and in fact impassioned, speaking with special emphasis. One notices that he finds himself here in a vital conflict with contemporary opponents and that for him much is at stake. In this connexion they disputed not so much the continued existence of the soul after death (this they did only partially) but asserted rather the sleep of the soul in the intervening state, i. e.

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1. Institutes, I, 15, ii

between death and final resurrection. In this view they are up to a point in the good company of Luther. But Calvin demurs to just this opinion with great violence and bitter contempt. He feels that any denial of the continued existence of the immortal soul in death - hence the title of his polemical study <sup>1</sup> - calls in question the truth of eternal life generally. Hence the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has special significance for Calvin and his eschatology." <sup>2</sup>

The second part of this Section of Fuller's Confession deals with what happens at death, and what follows immediately after it. "When the body dies, the soul returns to God who gave it, and there receives an immediate sentence, either to a state of happiness or misery, there to remain till the resurrection of the dead."

A development of this thought is found in the Sermon preached at the funeral of John Sutcliff on June 28th 1814. Fuller took as his text verses 20 and 21 of the Epistle of Jude, and after remarking on some of "The principles which are here suggested to us, as constituting true religion," <sup>3</sup>

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1. Psychopannychia means not the sleep of the soul but the watchfulness of the soul. (  $\pi\alpha\nu\nu\chi\iota\zeta\omega$  to be awake the whole night).
  2. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," p. 56
  3. Fuller's "Works," p. 638

he deals with "The prospects which these principles furnish as to a blessed hereafter." <sup>1</sup> He says that "the first exercise of mercy which the Scriptures direct us to look for, on our leaving the body, is an immediate reception into the presence of Christ, and the society of the spirits of just men made perfect." <sup>2</sup> He offers a series of texts from the Bible in support of this, the first of which deals with the beggar carried into Abraham's bosom. This is singled out for mention because the same passage is in Calvin's mind in writing on this subject.

Fuller had used this same thought in a much earlier sermon, that preached at the funeral of a deacon of the Kettering Baptist Church, Mr. Beeby Wallis, in April, 1792. <sup>3</sup> In speaking of the blessedness of the dead he points to the words "from henceforth" in Revelation 14, 13. "It seems, I think, plainly to refer to the time of their departure from the body." <sup>4</sup> In another sermon, called "Consolation to the Afflicted," Fuller says that "Glory awaits the righteous immediately upon their departure from the body." <sup>5</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 639

2. Ibid. p. 639

3. It was in his widow's house that the Baptist Missionary Society was founded later that same year.

4. Fuller's "Works," p. 554

5. Ibid. p. 666

Calvin is found to have expressed himself very similarly to this in the Institutes. "When the abode of blessed spirits is designated as the bosom of Abraham, it is plain that, on quitting this pilgrimage, they are received by the common father of the faithful, who imparts to them the fruit of faith. Still, since Scripture uniformly enjoins us to look with expectation to the advent of Christ, and delays the crown of glory till that period, let us be contented with the limits divinely prescribed to us - viz. that the souls of the righteous, after their warfare is ended, obtain blessed rest where in joy they wait for the fruition of promised glory, and that this the final result is suspended till Christ the Redeemer appear. There can be no doubt that the reprobate have the same doom as that which Jude assigns to the devils, they are 'reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.'" <sup>1</sup>

In his Commentary on Psalm 49 Calvin concludes his exposition of verse 15 with these words. "Let our faith be established in the great truth, that our soul, though it appears to vanish upon its separation from the body, is in reality only gathered to the bosom of God, there

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1. Institutes, III, 25, vi

to be kept until the day of the resurrection." <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Quistorp examines very carefully this aspect of Calvin's eschatology, and devotes twenty pages to "The State of the Soul after Death." <sup>2</sup> He deals with this under two headings, (a) "Provisional Blessedness," and (b) "Provisional Damnation." "Provisional Blessedness" is treated under two subjects, (i) "The rest of the soul," and (ii) "The waiting of the soul." His introductory summary is this: "Calvin teaches that man's soul, which is immortal in essence, does not perish nor sleep in death but in so far as it is born again in Christ already enjoys heavenly peace in the expectation of the resurrection of the body, which will bring it consummate blessedness; but the souls of the impious will be held imprisoned in terrible expectation of their final condemnation." <sup>3</sup>

Francois Wendel, summarising Calvin's thought on the future life says: "Le condition d'accès à cet au-dela est double: immortalité de l'âme et résurrection de la chair." <sup>4</sup> These two conditions are precisely those of Andrew Fuller.

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1. *Op. cit.* p. 253

2. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," pp. 81-102

3. *Ibid.* p. 81

4. "Calvin, Sources et Evolution de sa Pensée Religieuse," by Francois Wendel, p. 217

### 10. The Second Coming.

The theme of this final chapter is in part a continuation of the one considered in the previous chapter. At the beginning of these studies we noted that the various subjects could not be treated in complete isolation from one another. This is notably so in the case of Sections XVIII and XX of the Confession. Section XIX is of a special character, with an interest all its own, and we turn to it first.

It is the belief of Section XIX that there will be a gradual extension of "the kingdom of Christ...by the pouring out of God's Spirit upon the ministry of the word." For the arrival of this event "it becomes all God's servants and churches most ardently to pray." The relationship of this early declaration of faith, made in 1783, to the later missionary enterprise of 1792 is not often appreciated. If Carey said, "Let us do something," his closest friend, Andrew Fuller, had at least thought of the possibility of something being done. The eschatological expectations were not simply other-worldly, but also in a sense this-worldly. Yet they are not to be divorced from Fuller's doctrine of the last things. This is not to be conceived somehow as a belief in progress, as modern man has been tempted to think of it, but is

part of the general hope for the end of the age.

We see this worked out in some detail in Fuller's Discourses on the Apocalypse. These were first prepared as a series of addresses for the Church at Kettering, and delivered in 1809 and 1810. Several years later they were prepared for publication, but did not appear in print until after Fuller's death.

The whole of the Apocalypse, apart from the Letters to the Seven Churches, is treated prophetically. The seals and the trumpets are interpreted as particular events in history. For example, the first six seals deal in turn with, the apostolic age and the progress made; the wars between Jews and Romans, circa 70 A.D.; a famine in the time of the Antonines; the years 193 - 270; the tenth persecution of the Church under Diocletian; and the revolution under Constantine. The trumpets are associated with a variety of events, including the rise of Islam, and the western movement of the Turks. The vials which are poured out at the sounding of the seventh trumpet denote different events that have taken place in the previous twenty-five years, such as wars with the French, and sea conflicts with Spain and Portugal. Events still to come are anticipated there, such as the overthrow of popery, and all other "species of false religion." <sup>1</sup>

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 438

The present age is thus the time of the pouring out of the vials. Difficulties and persecutions may be expected, but before the Millennium there will be a period of great success following the preaching of the Gospel. "The success of the gospel in different parts of the world during the period of the vials will then meet as a confluence of rivers near the ocean." <sup>1</sup> The work of the Mission in India is considered as a possible part of this success. "Look at the blessing already attending the various attempts to propagate the gospel." <sup>2</sup> Fuller's hopes, therefore, of any temporal extension of the Kingdom are quite specifically related to his general hopes for the end.

Calvin never wrote a Commentary on Revelation so we cannot directly compare the two men. Wendel says; "L'auteur de l'Institution s'est toujours gardé de publier un commentaire de l'Apocalypse et qu'il ne l'a citée qu'avec parcimonie." <sup>3</sup>

There is a long Essay by Fuller on "The Heavenly Glory - Thoughts on the nature and progressiveness of the heavenly glory," <sup>4</sup> in which he tells the character

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 473                      2. Ibid. p. 482  
 3. "Calvin, Sources et Evolution de sa Pensée Religieuse," by François Wendel, p. 216  
 4. Fuller's "Works," pp. 953 - 961

of the Second Coming. Five things associated with it are named. "First, Salvation will be then completed.... Secondly, the opposition which from the entrance of sin into the creation has been carrying on against God shall now come to an end, and all its mischievous effects be brought to a glorious issue....Thirdly, the creatures of God will then be delivered from the bondage of corruption, or the yoke of being subservient to his enemies.... Fourthly, the glory of Christ as a Saviour will be manifested beyond any thing which has appeared before.... Fifthly, the mystery of God will be finished, or his great designs concerning the world and the church will be accomplished." <sup>1</sup>

These five aspects of the Second Advent have their prototypes in the teaching of Calvin. It is interesting and significant to discover most of them being discussed by Heinrich Quistorp in a section of his study of "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," dealing with "The event of the Parousia." <sup>2</sup>

First, the completion of our salvation by the Parousia is mentioned. "The Second Coming...properly consummates our redemption." <sup>3</sup> Dr. Quistorp says that Cal-

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 958 - 959

2. Op. cit. pp. 122 - 126

3. Ibid. p. 147

vin "brings out effectively the saving significance of the day and judgment of Christ." <sup>1</sup>

Secondly, the ending of all opposition is emphasised. "The future coming of Christ implies the effective establishment of His Kingdom." <sup>2</sup> Calvin's comments on Matthew 25, 31, are quoted. "He who in His incarnate life had hidden His heavenly majesty under the form of a servant will then be manifest with all the tokens of the power of that kingdom which is from heaven because it is the kingdom of God." <sup>3</sup>

Thirdly, the total deliverance of the creation from bondage is not overlooked, since Christ is "the Lord of all creation." <sup>4</sup> "On that day the whole creation with manifest signs will enter the service of its Lord Who is becoming fully disclosed." <sup>5</sup>

The above quotation from Calvin's discussion of Matthew 25, 31, is part of the fourth aspect, the manifestation of the glory of the Saviour. A passage from the Institutes is also cited. "To all He will appear in the ineffable glory of His Kingdom, in the radiance of eternity, and in the boundless might of divine majesty

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1. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," p. 146

2. Ibid. p. 123

3. Ibid. p. 123

4. Ibid. p. 124

5. Ibid. p. 124

accompanied by the army of angels." <sup>1</sup> Quistorp says:  
 "Calvin stresses the heavenly glory of the second as  
 opposed to the first advent of Christ." <sup>2</sup>

Fuller's fifth point is not specifically mentioned  
 in this section of Quistorp's work, but it is found else-  
 where in his book, for it is basic to Calvin's teaching.  
 For example, he refers to "the fulfilment of the church," <sup>3</sup>  
 and "the perfecting of the church." <sup>4</sup>

Fuller does not forget that "one great end of  
 Christ's second coming will be 'to judge the world.'" <sup>5</sup>  
 He is very anxious to show that this is "not merely to  
decide the future state of man, but to manifest the holi-  
 ness, justice, and goodness of the Divine proceedings....  
 In that day every intelligent creature shall perceive not  
 only what he does, but why he does it." <sup>6</sup> This will be  
 increased misery for the offenders but consolation for the  
 redeemed.

The character of the punishment of the reprobate as  
eternal perplexed Fuller, and in various ways he tried to  
 soften the harshness of the doctrine. We have already  
 seen that in Section VIII, on Election and Reprobation,

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1. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," p. 123,  
 Institutes II, 16, xvii

2. Ibid. p. 123

3. Ibid. p. 165

4. Ibid. p. 177

5. Fuller's "Works," p. 959

6. Ibid. p. 959

for by his emphasis on the manifest cause in man's unbelief he interpreted the latter as the determination of God to punish sin in some instances in the persons of the sinners. The series of long letters about Universalism not only set out the main arguments against such a belief for the benefit of Mr. Vidler with whom he was engaged in controversy, but also clarify his own mind on the difficult subject. While he holds firmly to Election and to Reprobation in general, he cannot contemplate the latter in particular instances. His closing words in the last letter to Mr. Vidler are significant. "Whether the kingdom of heaven be prepared for all men or not, that you and I may so agonize, in the present life, as at last to enter in, is the desire and prayer of your sincere well-wisher, A. F." <sup>1</sup>

The details of the Last Judgment Fuller does not attempt to portray. The language of Revelation 20, verses 11 - 15, is sufficient for him. "A more impressive description of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment is scarcely in the power of language." <sup>2</sup> On that occasion all the details of the lives of all men, great and small, shall be made plain at the judgment-seat of Christ, when the Omniscience of God will bring forth

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1. Fuller's "Works," p. 149

2. Ibid. p. 478

every event.

Apart from Fuller's special temporal hopes, many similar things are found in Calvin's writings. The Final Advent is a necessary and important article of faith. "This coming of our Lord is to seal and ratify everything He did and endured for our salvation." <sup>1</sup> He "will come as a judge on the last day." <sup>2</sup> He will vindicate the purposes of God against those who despise Him and hold the Gospel in contempt. No person, "either of the living or the dead shall escape his judgment" <sup>3</sup> on that day. All shall hear the summons of the trumpet. Those who are alive shall be caught up in the air.

The order of resurrection is given again in the "Catechism of the Church of Geneva." In reply to the question "What will be the order of resurrection?" the catechumen is required to reply in these words: "Those who were dead before will receive their bodies, the same as they had before, but endowed with the new quality of being no longer liable to death and corruption. But those who will then be living, God will marvellously

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1. Sermon on II Thessalonians 1, 6-10, in the volume "The Deity of Christ" (and other Sermons), p. 290, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1950
  2. Institutes III, 25, iii
  3. II, 16, xvii

raise up by sudden change." <sup>1</sup>

Calvin looks at Universalism for a moment and then bluntly rejects it as stupid and frivolous. Those who believe in it he regards as mere triflers. The majesty and justice of God must be vindicated on that great day, and "it is intolerable blasphemy to hold the majesty of God in so little estimation, as not to regard the contempt of it as of greater consequence than the destruction of a single soul." <sup>2</sup> Quistorp says that "Calvin's doctrine of election, together with his teaching about the judgment of Christ, excludes the hypothesis of a ἀποκατάστασις πάντων. For him neither before nor after the final judgment is there any possibility of universal salvation." <sup>3</sup> In his Commentary on the Epistle to the Corinthians Calvin again emphasises that the honour of God is vindicated in the destruction of unbelievers. <sup>4</sup>

The character of the eternal bliss the lips of man cannot speak. Of its excellence "scarcely the minutest part can be described by all that human tongues can say." <sup>5</sup>

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1. Calvin: Theological Treatises, p. 104

2. Institutes, II, 16, xvi

3. "Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things," p. 190

4. I Corinthians 15, 28

5. Institutes, III, 25, x

The nature of the eternal punishment "language cannot describe." <sup>1</sup> Calvin leaves it to the curiosity of the foolish to discover the exact nature of the flaming fire. <sup>2</sup> The main consequence on which we should dwell is the awfulness of estrangement from all fellowship with God. Its dread character is at once exhortation to turn to Him, and encouragement to persevere to the end.

From these comparisons we are justified in drawing this conclusion: Fuller is a Calvinist after the pattern of John Calvin.

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1. Institutes, III, 25, xii

2. See Calvin's Commentary on II Thessalonians 1, 8

Conclusion.

There are two conclusions that must be drawn from this detailed examination of Fuller's beliefs and their comparison with the teaching of John Calvin.

1. Fuller was more familiar with the writings of Calvin than is generally acknowledged. The large measure of agreement, not only in thought but also in words, may not be dismissed lightly as a coincidence, even when all allowances have been made for translations. He admits to knowledge of some of Calvin's writings, such as the Institutes and the Commentaries, for he quotes from them. Unconsciously he absorbed a good deal of their language, and it is reflected in his writings.

Other factors no doubt entered into Fuller's development as a genuine Calvinist, such as other men's writings. It is possible too that words and phrases of John Calvin were current within Calvinist circles in this country, and were accepted without it being understood that originally they came from the mind and pen of the Reformer. Some of these may have come by way of the Geneva Bible, as has been mentioned. The young lad Fuller may have picked up some of the words and phrases as he grew up in a Calvinist environment, not realising anything of their origin. From the

evidence before us, however, we may say that Andrew Fuller read widely in John Calvin.

2. The more important conclusion is that Fuller's claim to be a genuine Calvinist is well-founded. As an evangelical Calvinist he is a genuine Calvinist, for the original Calvinism, the system of the Reformer, is not the harsh and arid thing which is represented by many of the 17th and 18th century writers, and by the Confessions, but contains within it the evangelical note. Dr. E. A. Payne writes: "Classic Calvinism had within itself the essential evangelical impulse." <sup>1</sup>

It is the singular merit of Andrew Fuller that he sounded again for his contemporaries that evangelical note. In so doing he was not an innovator, repudiating the traditional faith of his denomination, but a true reformer, revealing afresh what the years had hidden. 18th century "Calvinism" was like a muddy stream, impure and debilitating. Andrew Fuller found again the source of the stream, higher up the course of history, and discovered its purity and refreshing quality. What the muddy waters had obscured, was plain in the original spring. Where others had said "Either Election or Exhortation," Fuller said "Both Election and Exhortation,"

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1. Congregational Quarterly, Vol. XXI, p. 235

thus understanding Calvin better than they.

Andrew Fuller said he was a genuine Calvinist, regarding the system of Calvin as his own. We have tested his claim and discover it to be no improper one, but well substantiated in his theology.

APPENDIX AFuller and Calvin on the Lord's Prayer.

A further illustration of the closeness of thought and expression of Calvin and Fuller is to be found in parts of their exposition of the Lord's Prayer. Although it can be argued that the same subject inevitably produces some similarity of expression, and that all expositors of the Lord's Prayer touch on the points that these two men deal with, nevertheless the parallels that can be seen suggest a closer affinity. Even though there may be no direct relationship, some indirect one must be assumed. Fuller's exposition certainly supports his claim to be a genuine Calvinist, for it is Calvinist through and through, and is like Calvin's own interpretation in many places.

Fuller's account is given as part of his "Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount." <sup>1</sup> Calvin's is to be found in his Commentaries and also in his "Catechism of the Church of Geneva." It is this last that we follow. We set out in parallel columns those parts which are most alike.

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 483 - 497

Fuller

"As there are three petitions in respect of God's name and cause in the world so there are three which regard our own immediate wants."

"The encouragement contained in this tender appellation is inexpressible. The love, the care, the pity, which it comprehends, and the filial confidence which it inspires, must, if we are not wanting to ourselves, render prayer a most blessed exercise."

"The privilege of approaching God as a Father has respect to the mediation of Christ."

"...the social principle which pervades the prayer..."

"Assuredly we are hereby taught not to confine our petitions to what respects ourselves, but to identify with our own cares those of our brethren."

"God is said to be in heaven...to encourage us to confide in his absolute supremacy and almighty power."

Calvin

"C: It has six parts, of which the first three refer to God's glory as their end without respect to ourselves; the remaining parts refer to ourselves and consider our interest."

"M: Why is the name Father, rather than any other, given to God?"

"C: Because a sure and trustful conscience is in the first place necessary for praying rightly, God assumes this name, which suggests nothing but pure kindness. So that banishing all anxiety from our minds, he may invite us to pray to him intimately."

"C: God holds us for children only in so far as we are members of Christ."

"M: Why do you call God in general our Father, and not in particular your Father?"

"C: Each believer may indeed call him his own Father. But our Lord used this common term to accustom us to exercise charity in prayer, not neglecting others in caring only for ourselves."

"M: What is the force of the added phrase, that God is in heaven?"

"C: It is the same as if I were to call him exalted,

Fuller

"Bread comprehends all the necessaries, but none of the superfluties of life."

Calvin

powerful and incomprehensible."

"...By this means we are taught to raise our minds upwards, when we pray to him, lest we should think carnally or materially of him, or measure him by the gauge of our own little standard; so that, thinking meanly of him, we should wish to reduce him to obedience to our will, instead of learning to look up with fear and reverence to his glorious majesty. This tends also to excite and confirm our faith in him, when he is proclaimed Lord and Governor of heaven, who rules all things by his will."

"M: What do you mean by this daily bread for which you ask?"

"C: In general, whatever contributes to the preservation of the present life, not only by way of nourishment and clothing, but also all those other helps supplied, by which the needs of external life are met; so that we may peacefully eat our bread, in so far as the Lord knows it is expedient.

"M: Why do you add 'daily' and 'this day?'"

"C: By these two terms we are incited to moderation and continence lest our desires should exceed necessity."

Fuller

"Still less are we allowed to ask for the bread of others, or to covet our neighbours' goods; but must be contented with what the Lord gives us in the way of honest industry, or by the kindness of our friends."

Calvin

"C: We are also reminded by this word to restrain ourselves from coveting the bread of others and to be content with such as has legitimately come to us from the hand of God."

The quotations from Fuller are to be found on pages 490 - 492 of his "Works."

The quotations from Calvin are to be found on pages 123 - 126 of the volume "Calvin: Theological Treatises."

APPENDIX BSome Correspondence between Joseph Kinghorn and  
Dr. Ryland, and between Dr. Ryland and Andrew Fuller.

In Fuller's "Works," page 971, three questions are published on the subject of the "Accountability of Man." They are:

"1. Since, on the present constitution of things, men never had a disposition to love and serve God, nor can it be produced by any circumstances in which they can be placed, how can they be accountable for what they never had, and without Divine influence never can have?

"2. If it be said that man is accountable from his powers and constitution, and therefore that God requires of him perfect obedience and love as the result of his possessing a moral nature; still how is it consistent with the goodness of God to produce accountable beings in circumstances wherein their rebellion is certain, and then punish them for it?

"3. If the reply to these difficulties be founded on the principle, that, from what we see, we cannot conceive of a constitution which hath not either equal or greater difficulties in it, is it not a confession that we cannot meet the objections and answer them in the direct way, but are obliged to acknowledge that the gov-

ernment of God is too imperfectly understood by us to know the principles on which it proceeds?

"The above queries are not the effect of any unbelief of the great leading doctrines of the gospel; but as every thinking man has his own way of settling such moral difficulties, you will confer a favour on me if you will state how you meet and answer them in your own mind."

No name is associated with these questions, and Fuller treats them as if they had come from a somewhat critical unbeliever. In fact they were originally posed in May 1809 by the Rev. Joseph Kinghorn, Baptist Minister at Norwich, to Dr. Ryland. They were raised in the course of conversation, for Kinghorn wanted the opinion of the other on the difficulties in them. Dr. Ryland asked his friend Kinghorn to write them down, as he was not good at giving spontaneous answers. Joseph Kinghorn did this and sent four questions to Dr. Ryland. One question, "What is the love which God hath for those whom he hath not chosen to eternal life?" was omitted in the published answer.

Mr. Kinghorn was rather distressed by the publication of the questions, and by the answers which assumed the unbelieving character of the person who had asked them. He wrote in the following terms to Dr. Ryland

on June 2nd, 1807.

"Norwich, June 2nd, 1807.

"Dear Sir,

A few days ago, I was very much surprised on finding three of the queries which I gave you in Mr. F's 'Dialogues, Letters, and Essays.' According to a copy which I have, I gave you four. It is often an unpleasant thing to find papers printed that were written with no such intention. It is peculiarly so when they are brought into controversy.

"I cannot have a doubt that Mr. F. had the queries ultimately from you, yet, as I know not the circumstances that might attend their communication, and do not wish to entertain an opinion in any case that is contrary to fact, I shall esteem it a favour if you will inform me, as soon as convenient, whether Mr. F. knows who wrote the queries? Whether you gave him either my paper or a copy for the purpose of his printing them? If not, whether you approve of what he has done, and of the reply he has given? Or whether I am to consider Mr. F. alone as accountable for printing them, and for what he has said about them?...

J. K."

Dr. Ryland replied to this letter and its many questions as follows:

"My Dear Brother,

I certainly did send brother Fuller a copy of your 4 queries, but I believe neither he nor any other person whatever has the slightest guess from whence they came. The 4th query he thought very distinct from the others, and therefore thought it best not to connect it with them, though I think he made some remarks upon it. He asked my leave to print the other three, and I consented; having forgot, however, that I had put a K- to them. I did not suspect that you could be displeased to see what he would say to them, as you wished to know what I should have said if I had found time to write myself.

"If I had not concealed your name, I would not have consented to the queries being printed without your consent. As it was, I imagined I could not have been displeased with you in the case inserted, and I took it for granted, your bushel was as good as my own. If I wronged you, I will be more careful next time....

John Ryland."

A further letter was sent by Joseph Kinghorn to Dr.

Ryland on June 22nd.      These are its terms.

"Norwich, June 22nd, 1807.

"Dear Sir,

I thank you for your ready attention to my question; and I think justice to you requires my acknowledging it, and to myself calls for some remarks on Mr. F.'s reply to the 3 queries. I freely grant you that had you said, shall I show them to Mr. F., I should have said you may, or to any other. But when I saw them in print I was surprised, and therefore wished to know how they came there. Before I judged farther either what you had done or Mr. F., I troubled you with my last; but even their being printed would never have been noticed by me, had they received either an answer or a handsome reply. As the case is, I think they have obtained neither. You will of course say Mr. F. is accountable for this; granted, but as the correspondence opened with you, permit me to say a few things on his reply.

"In the first place, what want of modesty or sobriety is there in the queries? Mr. F. intimates that they want both. Is it unfit or wrong to ask thinking men how the difficulties of God's government strike them, and how they meet and answer

them in their own minds? Is there anything in the queries that arraigns the conduct of God or that does not admit the fact, while they ask for a solution of the difficulty....

"The principle of the next paragraph, I think, wants a good deal of explanation before it can be admitted; viz. 'that in matters of acknowledged fact, objections on the ground of inconsistency with the divine perfections are inadmissible.' In exact proportion as any statement appears fairly inconsistent with the divine perfections, an objection does and will arise; and the subject demands consideration, how far it is rightly conceived and stated....

"It would be easy to add more, but I will only say that if Mr. F. meant it to be understood that he thought the limit of the human mind was so narrow as to admit of no satisfactory answer to such difficulties, there are many better ways of saying so than he has adopted....

"I acknowledge his talents and piety, and respecting both, pay him my willing tribute....

"His not knowing from whom the queries proceeded is no apology for the manner in which he has treated them....

J. K."

The next letter from Dr. Ryland to Joseph Kinghorn included Fuller's answer to Dr. Ryland on this matter, for he had informed Fuller, to some extent, of what had been happening. This is Fuller's reply.

"In answer to the author of the 3 queries, (whoever he may be,) I certainly did consider them as coming from some such quarter as the letter you showed me from C - , and it was to repel such objections that I printed them. Your correspondent acknowledges the facts, and asks only for a solution of the difficulties. Had I considered him as believing the facts, my answers would have been, perhaps, to this effect:-

"As to query 1, I conceive it is improper to denominate the fallen condition in which men are now brought into being 'the present constitution of things.' As this is supposed to be an acknowledged truth on all hands, would it not have been less exceptionable to have said - seeing by the original constitution of human nature, man having transgressed, his posterity have no dispositions etc. Nor do I consider the want of disposition as destroying accountability, which is the case with the want of natural power and opportunities. It is not only necessary to have had, but at all

times to have the latter in order to our being accountable creatures; but this is not true of the former. If it be, in proportion as creatures revolt from God they cease to be accountable. Disposition is not the rule of obligation, but the very thing we are obliged to. 'Thou shalt love with all thy strength.' But if disposition be not the rule of obligation, whether we ever had it, or not, or whether we ever can have it, without divine influence, or not, makes no difference as to accountability.

"As to No. 2, I consider 'certainty' a very different thing from physical necessity, or the necessity of compulsion.

"If we admit the foreknowledge of God, we must admit that he actually did create man in circumstances wherein his rebellion was to him 'certain,' and then punished him for it. Nor is this true of the first parents of mankind only. The conduct of Pharaoh was certain to God, and certainly foretold by him, and yet he was punished. The same may be said of the conduct of every other sinner. I may feel difficulty in reconciling these facts with the divine goodness, principally, perhaps, by my measuring his conduct to his

creatures, by what is my duty to those about me, and supposing that it is inconsistent with the goodness of God, not to do all that is in his power to make his creatures happy. But while reasoning thus, ought I not to ask - is it befitting a worm of the dust, who knows next to nothing, to measure his Creator's conduct by his own? Ought I not to take it for granted, that whatever God doth is right and best, whether I can perceive it or not? Many thing might appear to an angel a priori to be at variance with the perfections of God, which yet actually form a part of his system!"

At this point in the letter there is an insertion by Dr. Ryland. He comments on the preceding: "Possibly; yet a perfectly right spirit would go a great way towards forming a right judgment. J.R." The letter continues:

"And thus, though sinners never had a disposition to love and serve God, and no circumstance in which they can be placed will produce it, yet, being treated as accountable creatures in the sacred Scriptures, God requiring them to love and serve him just as much as if they were of opposite dispositions; every man's conscience also concurring

with the voice of God, telling him that the want of disposition has no tendency to diminish his responsibility; and finally, the universal practice of mankind in their treatment of one another uniting to prove the same thing; - ought I not to conclude that the difficulty which I feel in reconciling it with divine goodness, arises from some false principles which I have somehow imbibed, and which have led me, perhaps, to attribute that to the want of disposition, which is only attributable to the want of powers and opportunities.

"If your friend still think the difficulty unremoved, and that I in effect 'admit that the government of God is too imperfectly understood by us to know the principles on which it proceeds,' I only say, so be it. I freely acknowledge myself unable to solve many difficulties which others of superior judgment might solve. But as to those in question, with others relative to the origin of evil, I never expect to see such a solution of them as shall silence every objection which may arise in the human mind; and whatever others may do, I feel satisfied in reflecting that Scripture, conscience, and the practice of all mankind, concur

in treating sinners as accountable beings, and that, therefore, it must be in harmony with the divine goodness.

"I was wrong in supposing the querist to have alleged the difficulties in order to undermine the facts, but having heard them so often where that end was manifestly in view, I paid too little regard to his concluding paragraph.

"Allowing that 'in proportion as any statement appears fairly inconsistent with the divine perfections, an objection does and will arise, and that the subject demands consideration how far it is rightly conceived and stated,' this does not affect my position, which supposes that facts acknowledged, and that they are not misconceived or mis-stated. If there be any doubt on this subject, nothing that I have said objects to its being considered."

Some time after this Joseph Kinghorn and Andrew Fuller were introduced, and Fuller wrote to the other. An extract from Fuller's letter follows.

"You sum up the question in fewer words, by asking, 'what is the love which God hath for those whom he hath not chosen to eternal life?' I

should answer, the goodwill of the Creator, whose tender mercies are over all his works. It is that tender regard for the work of his hands which nothing but sin could extinguish, and which, in the infliction of the most tremendous punishments, is alleged in proof of its malignity, and to show how much they were against his native goodness; and that he would not have punished the offenders after all, had not the inalienable interests of his character and government required it. Such are the ideas conveyed, I think, in Genesis 6, 'I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth.' And Isaiah 27, 11, 'He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour.'

"Whether these few hints will afford any satisfaction to your mind I know not; but be that as it may, you will receive them as they are meant, and make what use of them you please.

A. Fuller."

The relationship established between Fuller and Kinghorn was a friendly one, and after Fuller's death he defended him in a pamphlet on the subject of mixed or closed Communion, joining issue with Robert Hall who had criticized Fuller's pamphlet on this subject. King-

horn's words are these: "Mr. Hall insinuates that Mr. F. did not sincerely believe that strict communion was founded on truth. So, then, Mr. F. wrote a pamphlet in defence of what he did not fully believe and authorised Dr. Newman on certain conditions to publish it, as his opinion! If Mr. F. did this he was not the man we took him to be. During about the last 12 months of his life, the writer of these pages met him in different places 4 times, and they had much free conversation on various topics. On one of these occasions, the subject of communion was brought forward, when Mr. F. said he had written a pamphlet upon it, which lay by him in manuscript. He was asked if he would not publish it? He replied: 'No it would throw our churches into a flame.' He evidently seemed to think, that while they were at peace, it was not right to disturb them. He then lent me the MS, but not to be shown to other persons. It was written in the form of a letter to a friend, and begins by saying, 'The long and intimate friendship that I have lived in, and hope to die in, with several who are differently minded from me on this subject, may acquit me of any other motive in what I write than a desire to vindicate what appears to me to be the mind of Christ.' The title is, 'The admission of unbaptized persons to the Lord's Supper inconsistent with the New Testament,' which title, Dr. Newman says, 'was written by the

author himself,' who said in a letter accompanying the MS, (not quite 4 months before his death,) 'If anything be written on the other side, it may, if thought proper, be published, but not else.'

"Let the reader now ask, Would Mr. F. have refused to print it before the controversy was agitated, lest it should throw our churches into a flame; then, when sinking into the grave, send the pamphlet to Dr. Newman, with the condition just recited, and leave the world solemnly declaring that such was his view of the 'mind of Christ' had his posthumous work as Mr. Hall insinuates, 'been rather a trial of what might be adduced on that side of the controversy, with a view to promote further discussion, than the result of deliberate and settled conviction?'"

The above correspondence is to be found in Wilkin's biography of Joseph Kinghorn of Norwich, page 312 and following. The extract from Kinghorn's pamphlet comes from the same source, commencing at page 411.

APPENDIX CThe Authorship of an Anonymous Review in the  
Evangelical Magazine of 1794.

On page 303 of the Evangelical Magazine for 1794, there is the review of a book by John Smalley, A.M., published the previous year. The name of this book is "The Inability of the sinner to comply with the Gospel, his inexcusable Guilt in not complying with it, and the Consistency of these with each other, illustrated, in two Sermons on John 6, 44." The subject is one which greatly concerned Andrew Fuller, and the question must be raised whether he is the anonymous reviewer. The text of the review may be quoted in full.

"Very considerable controversies have been agitated respecting the manner in which unconverted sinners should be addressed in the Gospel ministry. And though this is most certainly a very important article, yet there is a great want of unanimity of sentiment respecting it. Perhaps injudicious views of several Calvinistic doctrines have had an unhappy influence upon the minds of some. It must be owned there are characters in the ministry, and such as are zealous for the leading truths of the Gospel, who in the pulpit have little or nothing to say in a way of direct address to the unconverted part of their auditory.

Nay, some go so far as to contend that this is no part of their work. How such can reconcile their creed with the example of Christ; the commission he gave to his disciples; and the practice of the apostles; to say nothing of the conduct of the Prophets of old, it is not our province to determine. While that text, "Go preach the Gospel to every creature," stands in our Bibles, we must beg leave to think and act very differently.

"It is readily owned, that the discourses before us do not immediately handle this subject. Yet they discuss a question most intimately connected with it. In the introduction, after remarking the impotence and helplessness of men in themselves, and their entire dependence upon divine grace for salvation, the preacher observes, 'that there is a difficulty in the minds of many, how to reconcile this total helplessness of sinners with the sincerity of the Gospel call, or with the justice of men's being condemned and punished for their impenitence and unbelief.' Several ways in which some have endeavoured to solve the difficulty are pointed out and their insufficiency shown. He then adds, 'After what has been said, I think there is no way of attempting to clear up this mystery left, but by showing that there are two essentially different senses in which men are said to be incapable of doing things.' He further explains his idea by saying, 'The

one consists only in the want of a heart, or disposition, or will to do a thing: while the other consists in, or arises from want of understanding, bodily strength, opportunity, or whatever may prevent our doing a thing when we are willing, and strongly enough disposed and inclined to do it.' To these he applies the terms of natural and moral inability.

"To state and illustrate this distinction; to know that men certainly labour under one, or the other of these kinds of inability to comply with the Gospel, until they are made the subjects of effectual divine grace; more particularly to consider and evince the moral impotence of sinners, and endeavour to make it appear, that there is ordinarily no other incapacity in sinners, to comply with the Gospel, but that which is of the moral kind employ the preacher through two long sermons. At the close several important inferences are drawn, and, among other matters, the manner in which a ministerial address to the unconverted should be conducted is introduced.

"These sermons are evidently the result of close thought, and contain much strong reasoning. The subject is interesting, and the manner in which it is treated is serious. Several marginal notes are added by the author: one especially, upon the nature of true love to God, which begins on the 22d page, we beg leave to recommend to the

most serious attention of the reader."

There are several reasons which may be urged to try to prove that the anonymous reviewer was in fact Andrew Fuller.

1. The language contains several echoes of the words and phrases of Fuller. We cannot press this much, because arguments based on style are notoriously dangerous. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess a man's style from a short article. Nevertheless, this may not be completely ignored.

2. The subject of the book under review is treated by somebody who was sympathetic to it, and understood the dilemma of sinful man as both impotent and inexcusable. Andrew Fuller grappled with this problem from the time of the controversy in the Soham Church which resulted in the departure of Mr. Eve.

3. The reviewer is familiar with the controversies among Calvinists on the problem of how to preach to the unconverted. Andrew Fuller was one of the leading controversialists in this.

4. In his general survey of this controversy the writer not only takes up the point of view of Andrew Fuller but also reproduces some of his arguments for a direct address to sinners. These are, the example of Christ, the commission He gave to His disciples, the practice of

the Apostles, and the conduct of the prophets. All these are arguments offered in "The Gospel Worthy of all Acceptation."<sup>1</sup> The special emphasis on the commission to preach the Gospel to all creatures must be carefully noted. One of the preparations for the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792 was a small book by William Carey, "An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen." In this book Carey pressed the permanence of the commission of our Lord to His disciples. The title of the first Section is "An Enquiry whether the Commission given by our Lord to His Disciples be not still binding on us." The commission was therefore much in the mind of Fuller and his companions in the missionary enterprise which was commenced only two years before the writing of this review.

It must also be noticed that the distinction between natural ability and moral ability which is part of the argument of the book is one that Fuller knew and used frequently.

5. A final reason, which is more difficult to determine precisely, is the spirit in which the passage is written. The writer has no hesitation in revealing his

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1. Fuller's "Works," pp. 157 - 159

own position in the controversy about preaching to the unconverted, but he does not impugn the motives or the sincerity of those who take the contrary point of view. He leaves them with the problem of trying to resolve their practice with the teaching and example of the Bible. That is typical of Andrew Fuller in several ways. He always tries to be charitable to his opponents, not doubting their earnestness or their sincerity. He seeks to point out to them unresolved contradictions in their thinking, or between their thinking and their action.

No one of the foregoing reasons is sufficient in itself, but the sum of them offers a fair measure of probability that Andrew Fuller was the writer of this review.

APPENDIX DA List of the Works of John Calvin  
translated into English before 1800.

It has been assumed in the course of this study that some of the works of John Calvin were available in English translations, but we have not paused to find out how many. Occasional references have been made to particular works, such as Norton's translation of the Institutes. It is useful to see just how many of the works of Calvin were translated before the time of Andrew Fuller.

The archaic spelling is retained in these titles.

- An admonicion agst astrology iudiciall, tr. G. G. (ylby)  
1561
- Aphorismes of Christian religion. Tr. H. Holland 1596
- The catechisme or manner to teache children the christian religion, etc. J. Crispin 1556
- Certain homilies conteining profitable admonition for this time. (London, Hugh Singleton) 1553
- A commentarie vpon Genesis. Tr. T. Tymme. 1577
- Commentarie vpon the booke of Iosue. Tr. W. Fulke ? 1578
- The psalmes of David and others. With J. Caluin's commentaries. Tr. A. Golding 1571
- A commentary upon the prophecie of Isaiah. Tr. C. C(otton)  
1609
- Two and twenty lectures vpon the five first chapters of Jeremiah. (Tr. C. Cotton) 1579 ff.
- Commentaries vpon the prophet Daniell. Tr. A. G(olding)  
1570

- A harmonie vpon the three euangelists (the holy gospel acc. to John) w. comm. of J. Caluine 1584
- The commentaries vpon the actes of the apostles. Tr. C. Fetherstone. 1585
- A commentarie vpon the epistle to the Romanes. Tr. C. Rosdell. 1583
- A commentarie vpon St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians Tr. T. Tymme. 1577
- A commentarie vpon the epistles o the Galatians. Tr. R. V(aux)? 1581
- A commentarie vppon the epistle to the Philippians 1584
- A commentarie vpon the epistle to the Colossians. Tr. R. V(aux)? (1581?)
- The commentaries vpon the first epistle of Sainct. Ihon. a. vpon the epistle of Jude. Tr. W. H. (c. 1580)
- A commentarie on the whole epistle to the Hebrewes. Tr. C. Cotton. 1605
- An epistle both of godly consolacion and also of aduertisement, written to Edvvarde Duke of Somerset, translated out of frenshe by the same duke. 1550
- An excellent treatise of the immortalitie of the soule. Englished by T. Stocker. 1579
- A faythful and moste godly treatyse concernynge (sic) the sacrament. Tr. (M. Coverdale) 1549? ff
- An abridgement of the Institution of christian religion. By W. Lawne. 1585  
Corrected and augmented 1587
- The lectures of J. Caluine vppon the prophet Jonas. (Tr.) N. B. Annexed an exposition of the two last epistles of John by A. Marlorate. 1578 ff
- A little booke concernynge offences. Tr. A. Goldinge. 1567
- The mynde of M. J. Caluyne, what a faithfull man ought to do. (Tr. R. G.) 1548
- Of the life or conuersation of a christen man. Tr. T. Broke 1549

- Diuers sermons concerning Iesus Christe. Tr. T. Stocker  
1581
- Foure godlye sermons agaynst the pollution of idolatryes.  
Tr. by diuers learned men. 1561
- Foure sermons, with a briefe exposition of the lxxxvii  
psalme. Tr. J. Fielde. 1579
- Sermon on the historie of Melchisedech. Tr. T. Stocker  
1592
- Sermons on the epistles to Timothie a. Titus. Tr. L.  
T(omson). 1579
- The sermons of Iohn Caluin vpon Deuteronomie, gathered by  
D. Raguenier. Tr. A. Golding. 1583 ff
- Sermons vpon the booke of Job. Tr. A. Golding. 1574 ff
- The sermons of Iohn Caluin vpon the epistle too the Eph-  
esians. Tr. A. Golding. 1578
- Sermons vpon the epistle to the Galathians. Tr. A. Gold-  
ing. 1574
- Sermons vpon the songe that Ezechias made after he had bene  
sicke. Tr. (A. L.) 1560 ff
- Sermons vpon the X. Commandementes. Tr. J. H(armer) 1579 ff
- Thirteene sermons, entreating of the free election of God  
in Jacob. Tr. J. Fielde. 1579
- Three notable sermones vpon psalm 46. Englished by W.  
Warde. 1562 ff
- Two a. twentie sermons, in wh. is handled the hundredth a.  
nineteenth psalme. Tr. T. S(tocker) 1580
- Two godly and learned sermons (to flie idolatrie etc).  
Nowe published by A. M(unday). Tr. R. Horne. 1584
- Two godly a. notable sermons concernynge pacience in ad-  
uersitie etc preached in 1555. 1560
- A short instruction agaynst the pestiferous errorrs of  
Anabaptists. 1549
- Three propositions or speeches. Tr. by T. W. 1580

- A treatise on the Lord's prayer, xii articles of faith  
and x commandments. 1580
- Two and twenty lectures vpon the fiue first chapters of  
Jeremiah. (Tr. C. Cotton) 1620
- A very profitable treatise declarynge what great profit  
might come yf there were a regester made of all  
reliques. Tr. S. Wythers. 1561/62
- Whether christian faith maye be kepte secret in the heart,  
without confession thereof openly. 1553
- Calvin's Catechism, translated for the use of the English.  
1556. (Geneva printed)
- Praiers vsed by M. John Caluin at the End of his Reading  
on the Prophet Hoseah, tr. John Field. 1583
- The institution of christian religion. (Tr. T. Norton)  
1561 ff
- A treatise of a Christian Life, tr. John Shutte, 1594
- A harmonie vpon the three euangelists Matthew, Mark, and  
Luke, w. comm. of J. Caluine. Tr. E. P(aget). Where-  
unto is added a comm. vpon S. John (Tr. C. Fetherstone)  
1584
- The catechisme. Edin., by Evan Tyler 1645
- The Catechisme, or Manner to teach Children the Christian  
Religion etc. 1720

The sources from which this List is compiled are:

- Short Title Catalogue of English Books, 1475 - 1640  
(Pollard and Redgrave)
- Short Title Catalogue of English Books, 1641 - 1700  
(Wing)
- Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature, by W. T.  
Lowndes, enlarged by H. G. Bohn.
- British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y.Background.

- W. Adams Brown: Article on "Covenant Theology" in  
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,  
Vol. IV, p. 218 ff.  
(T. & T. Clark, 1911)
- D. S. Cairns: "The Image of God in Man." (S.C.M. 1953)
- H. W. Clark: "History of English Nonconformity." 2 vols (Chapman &  
Hall Ltd. 1913)
- G. R. Cragg: "From Puritanism to the Age of Reason." (C.U.P. 1950)
- Horton Davies: "The English Free Churches" (O.U.P. 1951)
- J. Edwards: "Enquiry into the Freedom of the Will." (London 1816)
- R. Erskine: "Scripture Songs." (Edin. 1771)
- G. P. Fisher: "History of Christian Doctrine." (T. & T. Clark  
2nd Edition,  
1897)
- R. Hall: "Help to Zion's Travellers." (W. Button & Son  
3rd Edition 1815)
- H. Heppe: "Reformed Dogmatics." (Revised and Edited  
by Ernst Bizer,  
translated by  
G. T. Thomson,  
Allen & Unwin, 1950)
- G. W. Hughes: "With Freedom Fired." (Carey-Kingsgate,  
1955)
- J. Ivimey: "History of the Baptists." 4 vols. (London 1811-1830)
- W. J. McGlothlin: "Baptist Confessions of Faith." (Baptist Historical Society,  
Kingsgate Press  
1910)

- B. Nutter: "Story of the Cambridge Baptists and the struggle for religious liberty." (Heffer 1912)
- Overton and Relton: "History of the English Church." (1906)
- E. A. Payne: "The Prayer Call of 1784." (Week of Witness Edition 1942)
- "The Free Church Tradition in the life of England." (Lutterworth 1948)
- T. Scott: "Reply to Tomline's Refutation of Calvinism." (London 1817)
- R. E. Seymour: "John Gill, Baptist Theologian." (Edinburgh University Ph.D. thesis, 1954. New College Library, Edinburgh)
- Skeats and Miall: "History of the Free Churches of England 1688 - 1891." (James Clarke & Co.)
- L. Stephen: "English Thought in the 18th Century." 2 vols. (1876)
- J. Stoughton: "Religion in England." Vol. IV (Hodder & Stoughton, 1881)
- G. M. Trevelyan: "English Social History." (Longmans, 2nd Edit. 1946)
- Williston Walker: "A History of the Christian Church." (T. & T. Clark) 1935
- B. B. Warfield: "Calvin and Calvinism." (O. U. P. 1931)
- W. T. Whitley: "History of British Baptists." (Kingsgate Press Second (Revised) Edition 1932)
- "Calvinism and Evangelism in England." (Kingsgate Press) no date.

- T. Williams: "Vindication of the Calvinistic Doctrines." (London 1799)
- B. Willey: "The Eighteenth Century Background." (Chatto & Windus, London, 1940)
- H. Witsius: "The Economy of the Covenants." 2 vols. (T. Turnbull, Edin., 1803 and 1804)
- A. C. Underwood: "The History of the English Baptists." (Kingsgate Press 1947)

Books dealing with Andrew Fuller.

Andrew Fuller: Complete Works. 1 vol. Edition  
(Wm. Ball & Co., London 1841)

Miscellaneous Pieces.

(Edited by J. W. Morris)

Letters. <sup>1</sup>

(The following is a list of  
the Letters, chronologically  
arranged).

1781

From (Soham?)	Jan. 28th	To John Sutcliff	(I. M.) <sup>2</sup>
" Soham	March 13th	" " "	(I. M.)
" "	Aug. 15th	" " "	(I. M.)
" "	Oct. 16th	" " "	(I. M.)
" "	October	" Mr. Wallis	
" "	(no date)	" Robert Hall	

1782

From Soham	March 13th	To Mr. Beeby Wallis	
" "	July 3rd	" " " "	
" "	July 19th	" " " "	
" "	Aug. 20th	" " " "	

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1. Copies of these Letters, with the exception of the John Rylands' Library group, are in the Library of Regent's Park College, Oxford, in sundry bundles.
  2. "I. M." means "Isaac Mann" collection. The originals are in the University College Library, Aberystwyth.

1782 (contd)

From	Soham	August	To a friend
"	"	Sept. 23rd	" the Church at Kettering
"	"	Sept. 27th	" John Sutcliff (I. M.)

1783

From	Kettering	March 22nd	To John Ryland
"	London	Nov. 4th	" " "
"	Kettering	Dec. 10th	" " "
"	"	(no date)	" a friend at Soham

1784

From	Spratton	Feb. 26th	To John Ryland
"	Kettering	August	" two relatives
" ?	Kettering	(no date)	" ? Brother Minister (J. R.) <sup>1</sup>

1786

From	Kettering	(no date)	To John Ryland
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1787

From	Kettering	Feb. 2nd	To John Ryland
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1788

From	Kettering	July 3rd	To Mr. Francis (?)
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1790

From	Kettering	Aug. 10th	To John Sutcliff (J. R.) <sup>1</sup>
"	"	Sept. 22nd	" " "

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1. "J. R." means "John Rylands' Library, Manchester," where the original manuscripts are.

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1791

From	Kettering	Jan. 7th	To	John Ryland
"	"	Jan. 4th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	April 13th	"	" "

1792

From	Kettering	Jan. 28th (? 1793)	To	John Fawcett
"	"	August 25th	To	Stephen Gardiner

1793

From	Kettering	Jan. 2nd	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 16th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Jan. 25th	"	Joseph Kinghorn
"	"	Feb. 4th	"	John Fawcett
" ?	Kettering	Feb. 6th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Feb. 8th	"	John Ryland
" ?	Kettering	March 15th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Birmingham	March 16th	"	Mr. Gotch
"	Northampton	March 26th	"	Thomas Steevens
"	Kettering	April 12th	"	John Fawcett
"	"	May 18th	"	Thomas Steevens
"	(no place)	May 23rd	"	John Ryland
"	Kettering	May 24th	"	" "
"	"	May 30th	"	J. Saffery
"	"	July 8th	"	Thomas Steevens
"	"	Aug. 29th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Aug. 30th	"	John Fawcett

1793 (contd)

From Olney	Oct. 5th	To Thomas Steevens
" Kettering	Dec. 3rd	" John Ryland
" "	(no date)	" Thomas Steevens
" "	1793	" Wm. Steadman

1794

From Kettering	March 25th - May 25th	To John Thomas, W. Carey, etc.
" "	April 21st	To John Ryland
" "	July 18th	" " "
" "	Aug. 30th	" John Sutcliff (J. R.)
" "	Sept. 16th	" " "
" Northampton	Nov. 19th	" " "

1795

From Kettering	Jan. 1st	To John Ryland
" "	Jan. 22nd	" " Sutcliff
" "	Feb. 13th	" " "
" "	March 13th	" " "
" Guilsboro'	March 5th	" John Thomas and Wm. Carey 1
" Kettering	April 2nd	" John Ryland
" "	April 14th	" Thomas Steevens
" "	April 29th	" John Sutcliff
" "	June 19th	" Thomas Steevens
" "	Aug. 28th	" John Ryland

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1. From the Society, signed by Reynold Hogg, etc.

1795 (contd)

From	Kettering	Sept. 1st	To	Joseph Kinghorn <sup>1</sup>
"	"	Oct. 9th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Oct. 31st	"	Samuel Pearce
"	"	Dec. 24th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 24th	"	John Thomas

1796

From	Kettering	Jan. 26th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 11th	"	" "
"	"	March 13th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	March 25th	"	John Fountain
"	"	April 22nd	"	" "
"	"	May 2nd	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 12th	"	John Ryland
"	"	May 16th	"	John Thomas
"	"	Aug. 9th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Aug. 22nd	"	John Saffery
"	"	Sept. 1st	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Oct, 3rd	"	John Sutcliff
"	London	Oct. 11th	"	Wm. Carey
"	Kettering	Oct. 26th	"	John Ryland

1797

From	Kettering	Feb. 6th	To	Zachary Macaulay, Free Town, Sierra Leone
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1797 (contd)

From	Kettering	Feb. 7th	To	Thomas Steevens
"	"	May	"	Dr. Stuart, Edinburgh
"	"	August	"	Mr. M'Lean, Edinburgh
"	"	Sept. 6th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Sept. 7th	"	John Fountain

1798

From	Kettering	Jan. 18th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 18th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	March 6th	"	Dr. Rippon
"	"	March 17th	"	Dr. Hopkins, New England
"	"	April 17th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 1st	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	May 11th	"	" " " "
"	"	Aug. 22nd	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Sept. 26th	"	Dr. Rippon
"	"	(no date)	"	Dr. Stuart, Edinburgh
"	"	" "	"	" " " "

1799

From	Kettering	Jan. 1st	To	John Ryland
"	"	Jan. 21st	"	'A Young Friend'
"	"	Feb. 18th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Feb. 23rd	"	" "
"	Wellingborough	Feb. 25th	"	Wm. Carey <sup>1</sup>

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1. Signed by Andrew Fuller, John Sutcliff and T. Blundel

1799 (contd)

From	Kettering	April 3rd	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	April 5th	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 15th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	April 18th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	April 26th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	May 1st	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	?	June 5th	"	an Editor (? Universalists' Miscellany)
"	"	June 7th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	July 3rd	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	July 18th	"	an Old Friend
"	"	Aug. 7th	"	Friends of the B.M.S.
"	"	Aug. 30th	"	Samuel Pearce
"	Hull	Oct. 4th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Oct. 7th	"	Dr. Rippon
"	Glasgow	Oct. 19th	"	Dr. Ryland
"	Bourn, Lincs.,	Oct. 31st	"	" "
"	Kettering	Dec. 23rd	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 30th	"	Rev. Mr. Coles

1800

From	Kettering	Jan. 11th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 27th	"	John Ryland
"	?	Feb. 25th	"	Dr. John Erskine
"	"	March 5th	"	John Ryland

1800 (contd)

From	Kettering	March 13th	To	John Sutcliff
"	London	March 26th	"	" "
"	Kettering	April 1st	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 12th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 5th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	May 6th	"	John Ryland
"	London	June 13th	"	Wm. Ward
"	Kettering	July 3rd	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	July 8th	"	John Sutcliff
"	(no place)	July 14th	"	Rev. J. Fawcett
"	Kettering	July 14th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	July 31st	"	John Ryland
"	"	Sept. 21st	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Sept. 24th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Sept. 24th		Copy of a Letter to Mr. Brown, Calcutta
"	"	Sept. 30th	To	John Sutcliff
"	(no place)	Oct. 7th	"	Friends of the Society
"	Kettering	Oct. 20th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Oct. 28th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Nov. 21st	"	" "
"	"	Dec. 11th	"	" "

1801

From	Kettering	Jan. 7th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 13th	"	" "

1801 (contd)

From	Kettering	January	To	an Elder Relative (? Father)
"	"	Feb. 18th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 27th	"	" "
"	Worcester	April 24th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	Kettering	May 23rd	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	May 24th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	June 15th	"	" " (J. R.)
"	"	July 14th	"	" "
"	"	July 20th	"	" "
"	"	July	"	Spence Broughton
"	"	Aug. 1st	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Aug. 2nd	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Aug. 5th	"	Miss Johnstone
"	"	Aug. 19th	"	Wm. Carey
"	?	(no date	?1801)	To "brother Kristno, Sister Joymooni, and any others who have since joined them in heartily embracing and publickly professing the name of the Lord Jesus." (Signed by 10 members of Committee, including Andrew Fuller). A Postscript to this Letter is dated August 22nd, and is addressed to William Carey.
"	?	August	To	a Friend
"	Kettering	Sept. 1st	"	John Sutcliff
"	?	Sept. 5th	"	?

From	Kettering	Sept. 9th	To	John Ryland
"	"	Sept. 14th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Oakham	Nov. 4th	"	John Ryland
"	Kettering	Nov. 10th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Nov. 18th	"	Dr. Rippon
"	"	Nov. 19th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	Nov. 25th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 1st	"	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 21st	"	" "
		<u>1802</u>		
From	Kettering	Jan. 11th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 26th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Feb. 2nd	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Feb. 11th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 5th	"	" "
"	"	March 26th	"	Dr. Rippon
"	"	March 31st	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 2nd	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	April 4th	"	John Chamberlain
"	"	April	"	the Editor of the Biblical Magazine, in answer to an anon- ymous objector.
"	London	May 19th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	May 26th	"	" "
"	Kettering	July 25th	"	" "
"	"	Aug. 21st	"	" "

1802 (contd)

From Barton-on-the-Humber Aug. 25th To Mrs. Fuller

"	Hull	Aug. 28th	To	Mrs. Fuller
"	Lincoln	August	"	" "
"	Dundee	Sept. 15th	"	" "
"	Glasgow	Sept. 19th	"	" "
"	Liverpool	Sept. 25th	"	" "
"	Kettering	Oct. 8th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Nov. 23rd	"	John Sutcliff
"	?	Nov. 23rd	"	Wm. Carey, Jr.
"	"	Nov. 26th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Nov. 26th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Nov. 26th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	Nov. 29th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 2nd	"	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 6th	"	Wm. Ward

1803

From	Kettering	Jan. 4th	To	John Ryland
"	"	Jan. 8th	"	" "
"	"	Jan. 8th	"	" "
"	"	Jan. 12th	"	" "
"	"	Jan. 18th	"	" "
"	"	Jan. 22nd	"	" "
"	"	Feb. 15th	"	John Sutcliff
"	(no place) (?Kettering)	Feb. 28th	"	Wm. Carey

From	Kettering	March 1st	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 6th	"	" "
"	"	March 6th	"	John Ryland
"	"	March 29th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	April 5th	"	James Deakin
"	"	May 29th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Aug. 6th	"	Wm. Carey
"	(no place)	Oct. 19th	"	Abraham Booth
"	Kettering	Nov. 4th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Nov. 11th	"	" "
"	"	Nov. 22nd	"	" "
"	Bristol	Dec. 5th	"	Dr. John Williams, New York
"	Kettering	Dec. 28th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 31st	"	Wm. Ward
		<u>1804</u>		
From	Kettering	Jan. 1st	To	Messrs. Mardon, Biss, Moore, and Rowe
"	"	Feb. 8th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Feb. 25th	"	a Church in Glasgow
"	"	February	"	John Fawcett
"	"	March 17th	"	Mr. Owen
"	"	March 29th	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 24th	"	a Church in Glasgow
"	Olney	May 10th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Dublin	June 6th	"	John Ryland

From	Dublin	June 7th	To	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	July 6th	"	" "
"	"	July 6th	"	John Ryland
"	"	July 9th	"	William Coles
"	"	Aug. 1st	"	Dr. John Williams, New York
"	"	Aug. 20th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Aug. 22nd	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Aug. 28th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Sept. 28th	"	William Coles
"	"	Oct. 25th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Oct. 27th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Oct. 31st	"	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 15th	"	John Fawcett

1805

From	Kettering	Jan. 14th	To	Wm. Ward
"	"	Feb. 11th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Feb. 28th	"	John Ryland
"	"	March 4th	"	William Coles
"	"	March 9th	"	John Ryland
"	"	March 26th	"	James Deakin
"	"	April 27th	"	William Coles
"	"	April 29th	"	" "
"	"	June 1st	"	Dr. Timothy Dwight
"	"	June 16th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Lincoln	June 19th	"	John Ryland

1805 (contd)

From	Edinburgh	July 4th	To	James Deakin
"	Glasgow	July 23rd	"	Wm. Carey
"	Lancaster	Aug. 1st	"	John Ryland
"	Kettering	Aug. 14th	"	James Deakin
"	"	Aug. 25th	"	?
"	Liverpool	August	"	Dr. Stuart
"	Kettering	Sept. 12th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Sept. 16th	"	John Sutcliff
"	?	Sept. 19th	"	'M'
"	"	Sept. 29th	"	William Coles
"	"	Dec. 15th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Dec. 15th	"	Mr. Rowe
"	"	Dec. 15th	"	Mr. Moore
"	"	Dec. 18th	"	Mr. Marden
"	"	Dec. 23rd	"	John Sutcliff

1806

From	Kettering	Jan. 31st	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Feb. 27th	"	" "
"	"	April 5th	"	Mr. and Mrs. Chater, and Mr. and Mrs. Robinson
"	London	May 7th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	June 6th	"	John Ryland
"	"	June 17th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Aug. 9th	"	" "
"	"	Aug. 25th	"	Wm. Carey

1806 (contd)

From	Kettering	Aug. 27th	To	Wm. Carey
"	"	Sept. 2nd	"	Isaac Mann (I. M.)
"	"	Sept. 9th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Sept. 25th	"	" "
"	"	Oct. 3rd	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	London	Oct. 6th	"	John Ryland
"	Kettering	Oct. 23rd	"	" "
"	"	Oct. 30th	"	Mr. Mardon
"	"	Oct. 31st	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Nov. 1st	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Nov. 8th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	Dec. 2nd	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Dec. 29th	"	John Sutcliff (I. M.)

1807

From	Kettering	Jan. 13th	To	John Ryland
"	London	Jan. 13th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Jan. 23rd	"	" "
"	"	Feb. 25th	"	" "
"	"	March 1st	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 20th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	April 23rd	"	" "
"	"	May	"	Ministers and Messengers assembling at Spalding on May 19, 20, 21, - from the Baptist Church at Kettering. (Signed by eight deacons).

1807 (contd)

From	London	June 11th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	June 13th	"	" "
"	"	June 20th	"	" "
"	Saffron Walden	July 9th	"	Wm. Ward
"	Kettering	July 29th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Aug. 1st	"	Isaac Mann (I. M.)
"	"	Aug. 25th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Sept. 23rd	"	" "
"	"	Oct. 31st	"	John Ryland
"	"	Nov. 19th	"	Bro. Moore
"	"	Nov. 24th	"	William Coles
"	"	Nov. 28th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 10th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Dec. 18th	"	John Ryland
"	"	(no date)	"	Joseph Kinghorn

1808

From	Kettering	Jan. 11th	To	Wm. Ward
"	"	Jan. 27th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Feb. 11th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Feb. 12th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	Feb. 16th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	March 1st	"	Bro. Moore
"	"	March 19th	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 5th	"	John Sutcliff

1808 (contd)

From	Kettering	April 11th	To	John Sutcliff
"	London	April 13th	"	" "
"	Kettering	April 16th	"	" "
"	"	April 18th	"	" "
"	"	April 22nd	"	" "
"	(no place)	April 23rd	"	Secretary of Bible Society
"	Kettering	April 30th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	May 4th	"	John Ryland
"	"	May 5th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 6th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	May 24th	"	Rev. William Newman
"	"	May 27th	"	John Ryland
"	"	June 19th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Aug. 20th	"	" "
"	"	Aug. 27th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Aug. 31st	"	John Sutcliff
"	London	Sept. 5th	"	Wm. Carey
"	Kettering	Sept. 7th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Brigg	Sept. 30th	"	Mrs. Fuller
"	Edinburgh	Oct. 18th	"	" "
"	"	Oct. 18th	"	" "
"	Glasgow	Oct. 31st	"	" "
"	Kettering	Nov. 14th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Nov. 21st	"	" "

1808 (contd)

From	Kettering	Dec. 26th	To	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 27th	"	Wm. Carey

1809

From	Kettering	Jan. 8th	To	John Sutcliff
"	12 Paternoster Row	Jan. 13th	To	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Feb. 6th	To	Wm. Carey
"	"	Feb. 6th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Feb. 12th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Feb. 21st	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	February	"	Robert Fuller
"	Cambridge	March 16th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	March 24th	"	" "
"	"	May 2nd	"	" "
"	"	May 15th	"	Mr. Mardon
"	"	May 15th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 15th	"	Serampore Brethren
"	"	May 15th	"	William Robinson
"	"	May 15th	"	Mr. Moore
"	"	May 18th	"	Mr. Chamberlain
"	"	May 18th	"	Mr. Chater
"	"	May 18th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Dunstable	June 8th	"	" "
"	Kettering	July 16th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Aug. 17th	"	John Sutcliff

1809 (contd)

From	?	September	To	Joshua Marshman
"	Kettering	Oct. 14th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Nov. 13th	"	? (? Ryland)
"	Biggleswade	Nov. 23rd	"	John Sutcliff

1810

From	Kettering	Jan. 10th	To	Wm. Carey
"	?	Feb. 6th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 2nd	"	John Ryland
"	"	March 20th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	March 27th	"	" "
"	"	April 27th	"	" "
"	"	April 30th	"	" "
"	"	May 13th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 17th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	London	May 31st	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	June 10th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Aug. 13th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Aug. 30th	"	a Young Minister
"	(no place)	Sept. 22nd	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Nov. 7th	"	Joseph Fuller
"	(no place)	Nov. 23rd	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Dec. 11th	"	" "
"	"	Dec. 28th	"	John Ryland

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1811

From ? Kettering	(no date - received Jan. 11th)	To John Sutcliff
" Kettering	Jan. 14th	" Wm. Carey
" "	Jan. 14th	" Wm. Ward
" London	Jan. 21st	" John Sutcliff
" 56 Lothbury	Jan. 21st	" William Newman
" (no place)	Jan. 21st	" Mr. Brown
" Kettering	Feb. 6th	" John Sutcliff
" "	Feb. 12th	" " "
" "	Feb. 27th	" John Ryland
" "	March 1st	" Wm. Ward
" "	March 4th	" John Sutcliff
" "	March 12th	" " "
" "	March 24th	" " "
" "	April 13th	" John Ryland
" "	May 11th	" Joseph Fuller
" "	May 11th	" John Sutcliff
" "	May 17th	" Christopher Anderson
" "	(no date - received May 29th)	To John Sutcliff
" "	May 31st	" John Ryland
" Pisford	June 5th	" " "
" Newmarket	June 11th	" Joseph Fuller
" ? Kettering	June 24th (? 1811)	To John Ryland

1811 (contd)

From	(no place)	Aug. 2nd	To	Wm. Carey
"	Kettering	Aug. 14th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	Newmarket	Sept. 18th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Oct. 5th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Oct. 7th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Oct. 10th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	Oct. 14th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	October	"	Mrs. Moore
"	"	Nov. 14th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Nov. 16/19	"	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 4th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	Dec. 17th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Dec. 31st	"	Christopher Anderson
"	(no place)	(no date)	?	Perhaps to John Sutcliff

1812

From	Kettering	Feb. 4th	To	Wm. Ward
"	"	March 2nd	"	Joshua Marshman
"	"	March 7th	"	Rev. John Birt
"	"	March 13th	"	Mr. Burls
"	"	March 26th	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 14th	"	Rev. John Birt
"	"	May 4th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	May 15th	"	Joshua Marshman
"	Abergavenny	May 31st	"	John Sutcliff (I. M.)

1812 (contd)

From Abergavenny	May	To John Sutcliff
" Bristol	June 13th	" Joseph Gutteridge
" Kettering	July 2nd	" Christopher Anderson
" Derby	July 15th	" Wm. Ward
" Kettering	July 16th	" James Hinton
" "	July 27th	" Rev. J. Saffery
" "	Sept. 27th	" Christopher Anderson
" "	Sept. 29th )	B.M.S. Letter to Missionaries,
	Oct. 16th )	continued by Fuller
" Northampton	Oct. 5th	To John Sutcliff
" (no place)	(post mark Oct. 15th)	To Rev. J. Saffery
" Kettering	Oct. 15th	To Christopher Anderson
" "	Oct. 25th	" James Deakin
" "	Oct. 30th	" Christopher Anderson
" (no place)	(post mark Nov. 2nd)	To Rev. J. Saffery
" Kettering	Nov. 9th	To Christopher Anderson
" "	Nov. 17th	" ? Wm. Ward (no name)
" "	Dec. 27th	" Christopher Anderson
" "	(no date)	" James Deakin
" (no place)	(no date)	" Mr. Burls

1813

From Kettering	Jan. 3rd	To John Sutcliff
" "	Jan. 4th	" J. G. Pike
" "	Jan. 4th	" Rev. William Newman

1813 (contd)

From	Kettering	Jan. 6th	To	Lord Moira
"	"	Jan. 7th	"	Joshua Marshman, etc.
"	"	Jan. 7th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Jan. 12th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Jan. 19th	"	Joseph Kinghorn <sup>1</sup>
"	"	January	"	John Ryland
"	"	Feb. 2nd	"	James Deakin
"	"	Feb. 5th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Feb. 21st	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	March 5th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	March 29th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	April 9th	"	" "
"	(no place) ? Kettering	April 29th	"	" "
"	Kettering	May 2nd	"	" "
"	"	May 25th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	May 28th	"	John Ryland
"	"	June 14th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	June 14th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	Carlisle	July 1st	"	John Ryland
"	Dumfries	July 2nd	"	" "
"	Greenock	July 10th	"	" "
"	Glasgow	July 16th	"	" "

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1. Wilkin Papers, 42

1813 (contd)

From	Glasgow	July 16th	To	John Ryland
"	Inverness	July 25th	"	" "
"	Aberdeen	Aug. 2nd	"	" "
"	Arbroath	Aug. 3rd	"	" "
"	Dundee	Aug. 4th	"	" "
"	Cupar, Fife	Aug. 5th	"	" "
	(The preceding 10 Letters are in one MS)			
"	Glasgow	July 19th	To	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	Sept. 7th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Sept. 8th	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Sept. 26th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Oct. 22nd	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	October (?)	"	Thomas Chalmers
"	"	Nov. 15th	"	John Sutcliff
"	"	Nov. 21st	"	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Dec. 14th	"	the Editor, Instructor Newspaper
"	"	Dec. 27th (? 1813)	To	John Ryland
"	"	Dec. 30th	To	John Sutcliff
"	?	(no date)	"	Carey, Marshman, Ward
"	"	(no date)	"	Joseph Kinghorn <sup>1</sup>

1814

From ?	Kettering	Jan. 28th	To	the Editor of The In- structor
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1. Wilkin Papers, 43

1844 (contd)

From	Kettering	March 11th	To	the Editor of the Baptist Magazine
"	"	March 24th	"	John Ryland
"	?	April	"	?
"	? Kettering	May 8th	"	John Sutcliff
"	Kettering	May 8th	"	" "
"	"	May 11th	"	William Burks
"	"	May 15th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	May 26th	"	John Ryland
"	?	June 11th	"	" "
"	Kettering	June 20th	"	William Yates
"	?	June 25th	"	John Ryland
"	Leeds	July 17th	"	William Yates
"	Durham	July 19th	"	John Ryland
"	London	Aug. 4th	"	Carey, Marshman, Ward
"	"	Aug. 18th	"	Jabez Carey
"	Kettering	Sept. 5th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Sept. 8th	"	William Yates
"	"	Sept. 18th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Sept. 29th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Sept. 30th	"	?
"	"	September (?)	"	the Editor of the Baptist Magazine
"	"	Oct. 1st	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	Oct. 20th	"	a young lady

1814 (contd)

From	Kettering	Oct. 26th	To	Rev. J. Saffery
"	"	Oct. 27th	"	Daniel Sutcliff (J. R.)
"	"	Nov. 5th	"	?
"	"	Dec. 22nd	"	Christopher Anderson
"	(no place)	(no date)	"	Rev. Wm. Nicholls

1815

From	Kettering	Jan. 2nd	To	Christopher Anderson
"	"	Jan. 9th	"	Wm. Ward
"	"	Jan. 11th	"	John Ryland
"	"	Jan. 16th	"	William Newman
"	"	January	"	Dr. C. Stuart, Edinburgh
	(? Liverpool)			
"	Kettering	Feb. 1st	"	Robert Fuller
"	"	Feb. 11th	"	Wm. Carey
"	"	Feb. 16th	"	James Deakin
"	"	Feb. 18th	"	Christopher Anderson
"	"	Feb. 25th	"	John Ryland
"	Liverpool	February	"	Dr. C. Stuart, Edinburgh
"	Kettering	March 19th	"	J. H. Hinton
"	"	March 20th	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 1st	"	Rev. Joseph Ivimey
"	"	April 2nd	"	John Ryland
"	"	April 13th	"	" "
"	(no place)	April 15th	"	Mr. Burls
"	Kettering	April 19th	"	?
"	"	April 28th	"	John Ryland

Andrew Fuller: Occasional Articles, as follows:

Evangelical Magazine

1793. pp. 67, 108, 150, 190, 235  
 1794. pp. 19, 50, 96, 147, 462, 72,  
 73, 226, 323, 375  
 1795. pp. 15, 52, 137, 151, 152, 184,  
 223, 240, 282, 357, 486, 487  
 1796. pp. 67, 141, 337, 359  
 1797. pp. 51, 99, 504  
 1798. pp. 113, 143, 276, 316  
 1799. pp. 67, 315, 543  
 1801. pp. 192, 273, 353  
 1802. pp. 93, 219  
 1803. pp. 21, 138, 287, 339, 445  
 1804. pp. 124, 250, 533  
 1805. pp. 10, 593  
 1806. pp. 271, 393, 489  
 1807. pp. 87, 412  
 1808. p. 65

Protestant Dissenters' Magazine

1798. pp. 227, 367  
 1799. pp. 20, 141

- J. Ryland: "Life and Death of the Reverend Andrew Fuller." (Button & Son) 1816  
 J. W. Morris: "Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Reverend Andrew Fuller." (Wightman & Cramp) 1826

- F. W. Butt-Thompson: "Wm. Vidler, Baptist and Universalist."  
(Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society, Vol. I, 1908-09, pp. 42 - 55)
- W. T. Whitley: "The Wallis House 1792."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. I, 1922-23, pp. 157 - 170)
- Gilbert Laws: "Andrew Fuller - 1754-1815."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. II, 1924-25, pp. 76 - 84)
- E. A. Payne (?): "Andrew Fuller and James Deakin."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 1934-35, pp. 326 - 333)
- F. G. Hastings: "Andrew Fuller and Ministerial Removals."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. VIII, 1936-37, pp. 11-17)
- E. A. Payne: "1792 and the Ministry Today."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. XI, 1942-45, pp. 65 - 73)
- E. A. Payne: "The Diaries of John Dyer."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIII, 1949-50, pp. 253 - 259)
- K. W. H. Howard: "John Sutcliff of Olney."  
(Baptist Historical Quarterly, Vol. XIV, 1951-52, pp. 304 - 309)
- Hannah Adams: "Views of Religion."  
(The full title is: "A Dictionary of all Religions and Religious Denominations, Jewish, Heathen, Mahometan, and Christian; Ancient and Modern; including the substance of Mr. H. Adams' View of Religions, reduced to an alphabet, with 150 additional articles, the whole carefully corrected and revised by Thomas Williams." It is published by Williams & Son; Button & Son; 1815)

Books dealing with Calvin.

- J. Calvin: Institutio Christianae Religionis  
 (Ed. A. Tholuck) (Berlin 1834)
- The Institutes, (translated by (A. Hatfield)  
 Thomas Norton.) 1599
- The Institutes, (Translated by (T. & T. Clark)  
 Henry Beveridge.) 2 vols. 1879
- Commentaries (Calvin Translation Society  
 Edition)
- Treatises 2 vols.
- Letters (Bonnet 1857)
- Sermons "The Deity of Christ" (Eerdmans 1950)
- Sermons "The Mystery of Godliness"  
 (Eerdmans 1950)
- Theological Treatises (Ed. J.K.S. Reid, 1954)
- A. Dakin: "Calvinism." (Duckworth 1940)
- E. A. Dowey: "The Knowledge of God  
 in Calvin's Theology." (Columbia Univ-  
 ersity Press)  
 1952
- A. M. Hunter: "The Teaching of Calvin." (Jas. Clarke,  
 2nd edition  
 1950)
- T.H.L. Parker: "The Doctrine of the  
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 the Last Things." (Lutterworth)  
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 2nd Impression 1952
- R.S. Wallace: "Calvin's Doctrine of the  
 Word and Sacrament." (Oliver & Boyd)  
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- F. Wendel: "Calvin, Sources et  
 Evolution de sa pensée  
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 Universitaires  
 de France 1950)