

A difference in the interpretation of a text of Scripture divided the Reformed into two opposing theological camps, the Calvinistic and the Arminian, the sharp lines between which are happily becoming more and more obscure by the prevalence of a scriptural and practical theology. James Hermanns, whose name was latinized into Arminius, was a minister of the Reformed Dutch Church in Amsterdam, towards the end of the sixteenth century. In the course of a series of lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, he came to the text, vii., 14, "I am carnal, sold under sin." This he interpreted as referring to the natural man or to the apostle prior to his conversion, and out of this interpretation was gradually evolved, though not by Arminius himself, the whole system with which we are familiar in Methodism and Morrisonianism. The Dutch Arminians had to pay for their interpretation by cruel persecution. Modern Universalism is a very different creed from Arminianism, but, like it, it had its origin in a text. John Petersen was removed from his position of Lutheran superintendent at Luneburg on account of his peculiar views. Then, he and his devoted wife, both pious premillenarians, set themselves to search the Scriptures with the view of settling the time of our Lord's second coming. The passage in Revelation (v., 13, 14) which states that every creature, even those under the earth, shall praise God, led their minds in another direction, so that, with that great father of the third century, Origen, they believed that all men and even devils will be saved by the mediation of Christ.

Two remarkable geniuses of the eighteenth century in Germany were Oetinger and Hamann, the first of whom was called the Magus of the South, and the second, the Magus of the North. Early piety was screwed on and poured into simple little Fritz of Wurtemberg. His father taught him long prayers on his knees, and his mother, when she went out, set the Bible before him, and told him not to rise till he had learned by rote the prescribed number of chapters. Yet in this hard course of training his eye fell upon Isaiah liv., 11-14,