

## THE CALVINISTIC SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE—MISREPRESENTATIONS EXPOSED.—No. 3.

The charge against Calvinism that it includes the doctrine of the damnation of infants—a charge to which we replied in our June number, is advanced by Methodist writers in the style they so commonly employ in dealing with Calvinism—that of reckless, unhesitating assertion, unaccompanied by any attempt at proof. Wesley in his sermons merely asserts the charge in the low language which we quoted; and Watson, the Methodist theologian, deals likewise in mere affirmation on the subject. The organ of Wesleyanism in this province simply writes as if that doctrine were an unquestionable and essential part of Calvinism, calling it, too, “a consequence of Calvinism which brings it out in all its hideous features.” It is one of the doctrines of the church of Rome that no infant dying unbaptised is admitted into heaven, while some Popish authors at once consign all such infants to hell; similar views are held in the church of England by the high church and Puseyite parties, among whom Arminian sentiments are prevalent; but the animus of Methodism is displayed in its continually endorsing and keeping alive the slander against Calvinism by Wesley, and in the fact that the tirades of Methodists on this subject are directed, not against Romanists and high church Episcopalians, but against Calvinists, as if the latter, and they only, were guilty in this respect. This simple fact, of itself, shows that there is a great deal of pretence in their apparent zeal in this matter, and that blind hatred of Calvinism lies at the root of it all. But are they themselves free from liability to the charge of teaching that there are infants that die in infancy and perish? Let the following facts testify.

Wesley, in drawing up the articles of Methodism, which were made up out of the articles of the church of England with many alterations and numerous and large omissions, inserted only the first portion of the article on original sin, but, in setting forth the principles of Methodism in a pamphlet entitled “The Principles of a Methodist,” and elsewhere in his works, he expresses his belief of the doctrine contained in a subsequent portion of the same article—a portion which states that this corruption of our nature in every person born into the world deserves God’s wrath and damnation. He also held, as we find from his treatise on baptism, “that the whole race of mankind are obnoxious both to the guilt and punishment of Adam’s transgression”—“that we are all born under the guilt of Adam’s sin, and that all sin deserves eternal misery,” and that as infants die, they must have sinned, not by actual sin, but by original; else what need have they, he asks, of the death of Christ? On this subject Methodist writers are at variance, and put forth opposite and contradictory sentiments—some adhering to the doctrine of Wesley, and others, again, asserting to the contrary that they are born free from condemnation, or that they were born corrupt and so cannot be guilty for this. How is it possible to reconcile Wesley’s belief that the corruption with which we are born deserves God’s wrath and damnation—a belief which he ascribes to Methodists in general, with the assertion, which he and they make so freely at other times, that men are not to blame, and are not to be punished, for what they cannot help? We have made these statements with reference to the views of Wesley