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THE CALVINISTIC SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE—MISREPRESENTATIONS
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The Calvinistic and Arminian systems of doctrine differ from each other, not in regard to the number of the saved, but in their *exposition of the process* through which, and of the principles on which, the salvation of sinners is effected. They differ also in the accounts they give of the condition of men by nature, and consequently, to some extent, in their accounts of the manner in which the destruction of the lost is brought about. Leaving out of view the *modifying influence* of additional doctrines, such as that of baptismal regeneration held by many Arminians, (the influence of which we pointed out in our last paper,) the number of the saved and of the lost at the consummation of all things will be the same according to both systems. Any authoritative assertion as to the proportion which the saved will ultimately be found to bear either to the lost, or to the human family as a whole, forms no part whatever of either system; and there is nothing in Calvinism to prevent any one from believing, if he thinks he has scriptural grounds for doing so, that the great majority of our race will be seen at last to have been embraced in the scheme of divine mercy. If, on contemplating the past or present state of the world with the view of estimating the relative numbers hitherto of the godly and the ungodly, Calvinistic divines have taken a lower view of the proportion of the former than some Arminians have done, and especially Arminians of the low Pelagian type, who have virtually denied a bible doctrine so essential as regeneration, this has only arisen from the higher estimate which these divines have entertained of the rule by which the religious condition of men is to be judged—or that holiness the possession of which renders men meet for the heavenly inheritance. There is nothing whatever stated in any of the authoritative standards of Calvinism about the relative proportion of the saved and of the lost; there is nothing on this subject embraced in the points of difference between Arminians and Calvinists: a Calvinist would deny salvation to none to whom an Arminian could consistently concede it; and yet it has been common with Arminian writers, with the view of exciting prejudice and hostility against Calvinism, to represent it as teaching that a comparatively small number will be saved, and as consigning to perdition multitudes who, according to Arminianism, would be heirs of glory.