

doctrines being taught in the statements of Divine decrees as above laid down, Against this doctrine, we present the candid reader with a few considerations.

First, we charge it with *making God the author of all the sin ever committed by man or angel*. We know this will be disclaimed. We know it is disclaimed by the Confession. We know we will—as others have been—be called “slanderers,” and “ecclesiastical liars.” But abuse and disclaimers are no substitute for argument. What is needed is proof, that the Confession is misrepresented, or that the consequences do not logically result from it. And despite angry abuse, and indignant disclaimers—if the doctrine of Divine decrees, as taught in the Confession of Faith, is true—God is the author of all sin. The term *author* is here used in the sense of *originator*, or *efficient cause*. The Confession teaches that God, eternally, unchangeably, fore-ordained, or decreed, “whatsoever comes to pass in time.” Very well. Sin comes to pass in time, therefore God decreed sin. Is there any way of escape from this consequence? We think not. Let us look at some of the serpentine evolutions resorted to in order to evade the charge. It has been said, the Confession itself teaches that, the decree is so executed, that “God is not, thereby the author of sin.” In teaching thus, the Confession does what its upholders do, asserts self-contradictions. Both maintain a doctrine, and in the same breath deny one of its necessary logical consequences. Will any of the theologians of the Confession tell us how God could decree, absolutely, and unconditionally, “whatsoever comes to pass,” without being the author of the sin? Does not every candid, intelligent being see that this cannot be? To assert the contrary, is as absurd as to say that the Legislature of Canada passed *all* its laws, but in such a way as that there are *some* of them which it did *not* pass. Out on such nonsense.

Another sophism is resorted to, in order to avoid the conclusion that God is the author of sin—if the Confession is true. It shows how God decreed everything without decreeing sin.

“God’s effective decree respects all the good that comes to pass. His permissive decree all the evil that is in sinful action.” “We must distinguish between actions purely as such, and the sinfulness of the actions. The decree of God is effective with respect to the action itself, abstractly considered; it is permissive with respect to the sinfulness of the act, considered as a moral evil.”