

Vol. 3.]

[No. 2.

BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

NEW SERIES.

VOL. I.]

APRIL, 1829.

[No. 2.

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PRINCETON, N. J.

CONNOLLY & MADDEN, PRINTERS.

1829.

REVIEW.

Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus Christ; and on the Atonement and Redemption. By JOHN PYE SMITH, D. D. London. B. J. Holdsworth. 1828. pp. 316. 8vo.

THE author of these Discourses has long held a distinguished place among the Dissenters, in England, as a learned and orthodox theologian and accurate biblical scholar. As an able writer, also, Dr. Smith is well known to the religious community, especially by his important work on the divinity of the Saviour, entitled, *SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY TO THE MESSIAH*. And it is to us a matter of some surprize that this production has never been re-published in this country; as the subject treated is of the highest importance, and one earnestly discussed among us.

It is known to our readers, that Dr. John Pye Smith is professor of theology, in the Academy at Homerton, where a large number of the pastors in the Independent churches of England, receive their education. This important station he has filled, with great respectability and usefulness, for many years. In his theological opinions, he may be denominated, without impropriety, a moderate Calvinist; though his creed is not derived from any human system or human authority, but from a careful, critical, and conscientious study of the Scriptures. The trait in his character which appears most conspicuously in his writings, is an ardent love of truth. To this he seems to be willing to pay supreme deference; so that he will avail himself of no argument or interpretation unless he is convinced that it is sound. Under

the influence of this noble disposition he is sometimes led to concede some points, which others on the same side have strenuously maintained; and has thus appeared, occasionally, to weaken his own cause. But after all, it is probable, that he gains more than he loses by such a course. Truth needs no aid from error and sophistry; and every defender of truth should be scrupulous, not to admit any suspicious auxiliaries. It has a mighty influence to disarm the prejudice and conciliate the favour of the reader, when an author makes it manifest, that he would not willingly mislead him, if he should have it ever so much in his power.

Dr. Smith appears to be extensively acquainted with the writings of the best theologians, both of ancient and modern times. He has not overlooked, in his various reading, the celebrated writers of the new school of theology, or rather neology, in Germany. The opinions of these subverters of pure Christianity, he treats, as they deserve, with little respect; but he does not disdain to derive aid from the profound and critical researches of these indefatigable scholars.

The first of the Discourses in the volume before us, was originally published as early as the year 1813, and was well received by the public, and highly esteemed by the friends of sound doctrine, notwithstanding that it followed the learned and popular work of Dr. (now Archbishop) Magee, on the same subject. On the general doctrine of the vicarious sufferings of Christ, Dr. Magee's Discourses and Dissertations, produced an extensive and salutary impression on the public mind. Perhaps, no publication, in the English language, for a century past, has had a more beneficial operation, in settling the sentiments of men on this important doctrine. But excellent as this work is in establishing the main point relative to the atonement, yet if we look to it for satisfaction on a number of subordinate but important points, we shall be disappointed in our expectation. Clear and definite ideas of the necessity, nature, and end of the

atonement, are much more satisfactorily exhibited by Dr. Smith, in these Discourses, than in the more popular work of the Archbishop. In our own opinion, however, the old work of Dr. Outram, *De Sacrificiis*, is superior to both of them, in just and accurate views, on this important subject. This valuable treatise has been long known to the learned, and within a few years, has been rendered accessible to the English reader, by the translator of Calvin's Institutes.

Dr. Smith has adopted a practice in the citation of testimonies from the Scriptures, against which we feel constrained to enter our protest. Instead of quoting the words of the authorized version, he gives us his own private interpretation. In his preface, he has assigned his reasons for pursuing this course, but we are not satisfied with the apology. If one person may use this liberty, so may every one, and the consequence would be, interminable confusion. Every smatterer in Greek and Hebrew literature, and every wild errorist, would come forward with their *improved* versions, of such parts of Scripture as they wished to turn to the advantage of their own cause, and thus the word of God would be rendered contemptible, and the confidence of the people in it as a fixed and infallible standard would be greatly shaken by seeing the sense of the same passage so differently represented. We do sincerely hope, therefore, that this example will not be followed. We do not say, that our English version of the Bible is infallible, or that it has any authority, where it departs from the true meaning of the original; but the correct method of proceeding, in our opinion, is, to cite testimonies, in the words of the commonly received version; and then, if the writer is of opinion that the sense is not fairly or fully given, let him exercise his critical skill, as much as he pleases, in endeavouring to elicit and establish the true meaning.

The style of these Discourses is, for the most part, perspicuous, and sometimes forcible and animated; but in our

judgment, too much minute and dry criticism is introduced into them, which should have been referred to the Notes and Illustrations. As they are now constructed, they cannot possibly be of any use but to the learned reader; whereas by throwing the greater part of the critical discussion into the Notes, the principal argument would be level to the capacity of any intelligent person.

We think it also a fault, that the learned author, by endeavouring to render his definitions very accurate, in the abstract, often introduces obscurity into a subject, otherwise plain. Of this we have a remarkable example, in the Third Discourse, (p. 183.) where he formally gives the definition of *holiness* and *sin*. "Holiness," says he, "is the respecting of the *due relations*, or the objects of intended reference, which *ought to be*, in the performance of actions." And, "Sin is the absence of respect to the due relations of actions." Now, we believe, that these definitions are accurate; but do they elucidate the subject? If the words defined were removed, would any mortal be able to divine, what the subject of the definitions was? It would answer just about as good a purpose, to exhibit holiness and sin in algebraic signs.

Indeed, the greatest defect which we have observed in this truly learned and respectable author, is, too great a fondness for abstract reasoning, in cases, where the simple declaration of God is of more weight than all the reasonings in the world.

Our object, in the review of these Discourses, is merely to bring them to the notice of our readers, to furnish them with a general analysis of their contents, and to give some extracts of sufficient extent, to enable them to judge for themselves, not only of the author's style, but of his theological views.

The text on which these Discourses is founded, is, Heb. ix. 14,—*The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God.*

In the first Discourse—which in this edition extends through 82 pages—the subject treated is, THE NATURE OF THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST. In discussing this important point, the author considers the following particulars. 1. The general nature of sacrifices. 2. The symbolical character of the ancient sacrifices. 3. The reference of these to the sacrifice of Christ. 4. The proper value of the sacrifice of Christ. 5. The efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ.

The views of the learned author, relative to the nature and origin of the ancient sacrifices, will be best learned from the following extract:—

“A sacrifice, properly so called, is the solemn infliction of death on a living creature, generally by effusion of its blood, in a way of religious worship; and the presenting of this act to the Deity, as a supplication for the pardon of sin, and a supposed mean of compensation for the insult and injury thereby offered to his majesty and government.

“The practice of offering sacrifices to the true God, or to fictitious divinities, is known to have been a custom, in the most complete sense, universal and ancient. The records of the early history of nations, and the narratives of modern discovery, equally show the prevalence of sacrificial rites, in all countries where they have not been superseded by Christianity. The manner in which men performed those rites showed their strong apprehension of importance and interest in them. The inferior and less serviceable animals were not generally devoted to this purpose; but the animals of most utility to man were the usual sacrifices, and these often in large and costly numbers. Such profusion proved the serious earnestness of those who used it: yet, in instances without number, more horrid proofs were given. On great occasions of terror, or of expectation, human beings were the victims of this dire immolation. Unhappy and bewildered mortals have sought relief from the pangs of guilty dread, and have hoped to atone for past crimes by committing others still more awful: they have given their first-born for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul.

“The remote antiquity of these observances is attested by the most venerable remains of classical and oriental composition: and the most ancient and authentic of documents, the sacred history, carries them back to the first family of man.

“It is the opinion of some, that, in allusion and accomodation to these practices, and with a view to facilitate the reception of Christianity by gratifying the prejudices of the Jews, the New Testament represents Jesus Christ as having offered a sacrifice to God; though, in a real and proper sense, he did no such thing. These interpreters affirm that, as the Jews had a profound veneration for their temple, their priesthood, and their altar, the first Christian teachers endeavoured to ingratiate themselves and procure acceptance to their system, by finding in it likewise a priest, a sacrifice, and an altar. To this mode of representation we object, that, as an hypothesis, it is defective, and that it is contrary to the testimony of Scripture.

“It is defective, as an hypothesis, in that it leaves the previous fact unaccounted for; the existence of sacrifices, their origin, and their design. An attempt is made to remove the difficulty, by alleging that the worship by sacrifices ‘was of the nature of a present, by way of homage to the Supreme Being.’*—On this supposition, must we not deem the bloodless, innocent, and more natural offering of Cain, the fruits of the earth, more rational in itself, and more likely to be agreeable to the Deity, than that of Abel, which appears revolting to the feelings of humaity, a useless waste of animal life, and, as an act of worship, manifestly absurd? But, passing by the grossness of the invention, what conceptions must those form of the blessed God, who imagine that with such services HE could be gratified?

“We also object that this notion is inconsistent with the plain language of the Scriptures, in regard both to the ancient sacrifices, and to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Evidence for both the parts of this remark we shall presently submit to the reader’s judgment.

“A doctrine, the reverse of that to which we have referred, appears to us the dictate of the divine oracles and of impartial reason. This is, that the ancient sacrifices were themselves only *allusions*; and that they were intended as a REPRESENTATION of the sufferings and death of the Messiah, or as a DECLARATION of the doctrine included in that grand future fact, and taught by it.

“In the communication of knowledge from man to man, the living voice is a very imperfect instrument. The extent of its use is narrowly circumscribed by infirmity and death. The advantages of man’s primitive longevity were opposed by prevailing and increasing corruption and practical wickedness must in time have effaced right impressions of religious truth. The tongues of patriarchs and pro-

* Dr. Priestly’s Notes on Scripture, Vol. i. p. 13.

phets were soon silent in the grave : and the mere memory of their instructions, however for a time affectionately cherished, was a hazardous channel of communication for truths of infinite concern. Hence a *language of mute signs* must have appeared to possess incalculable advantages, as soon as the idea of such an instrument was entertained. Such a representative of language might be of two kinds, the *symbolical* and the *arbitrary*. The latter kind is alphabetical writing : and an admirable contrivance, whether it was entirely the fruit of human ingenuity, or, as some have supposed, originating in divine communication. It is probable that the first extensive use of this invention nearly coincided with the considerable increase of population, and the reduction of the length of human life to its present standard. The brevity, ease, and universal application of this method, have given it an almost exclusive prevalence among the cultivated nations which have been founded to the west of the original seats of the human race.

“But we have reason to think, that a more remote antiquity may be claimed for the other kind of signs, the *symbolical*. This was a system of natural significancy, in which visible objects or their pictures, and actions performed with this express design, were used to represent and convey information. This plan was prevalent in the earliest periods, and among the most ancient nations. Even at this day, a written language, which is understood by about one third part of the human race, is of this description: the Chinese. It is founded upon the principle of employing characters, not as representatives of sounds, but as types or symbols of ideas ; and it is familiarly understood by nations whose spoken dialects differ greatly.

“Of this kind we conceive the rite of sacrificing to have been : a *symbolical action*, adapted and intended to convey important instruction. We shall offer our reasons for regarding sacrifices as thus intentionally significant ; and then shall inquire into the particular ideas and moral sentiments which were so represented.

“Our arguments in favour of the notion that sacrifices were intended as a species of symbolical language, will be drawn from their very Nature and Form, from their Origin, and from the Sentiments of those who practised them.

1. “The nature, form, and circumstances of a sacrifice carried an obvious import upon their very first aspect. The selection, presentation, and immolating of the unoffending animal, the regard paid to its blood, its consumption by fire, the solemn ceremonies which accompanied, and the particular confessions and supplications of the

worshipper,—must have powerfully impressed the ideas of sin and guilt, the desert of punishment, the substitution of the innocent, and the pardon of the transgressor. When men were accustomed to symbolical actions, such a significancy would be more readily apprehended and more solemnly felt, than under our circumstances and habits. The refinements of advanced society, and the general use of letters, have made us far less sensible to the language of living signs than the ruder children of nature have always been. How much more must the impression on the heart have been increased, when *the first* sacrifice was offered: when the parents of our race recent from their guilty fall, were abased by the divine rebuke, driven from their blissful seat, and filled with dismay at the threatening of DEATH! A threatening piercing through their souls, but of the nature and effects of which they could form none but vague ideas. But when, directed by stern authority, to apply some instrument of death to the lamb, which, with endearing innocence, had sported around them,—an act of whose effects they as yet knew nothing,—they heard its unexpected cries, they beheld the appalling sight of streaming blood, and struggling agonies, and life's last throes,—they gazed upon the breathless body,—and they were told, THIS IS DEATH:—how stricken must they have been with horror such as no description could ever paint! When, further, they had to go through all the other process of the sacrifice, their hands reluctant, and their hearts broken, and all their soul crushed down by the sad consciousness that these horrid things were the fruit of their sin, and yet contained the hope of their deliverance;—who can imagine the extremity of their feelings?

2. “The origin of sacrifices we have good reason to regard as from Heaven, and not of men. In the institutes of the Levitical law, the express divine sanction is indisputable: and if we go back to the remotest times, we shall find indications of the same authority. The approbation of God is solemnly recorded to the sacrifices of Job and Abraham, Noah and Abel. But, in religious institutions, the Most High has ever been jealous of his prerogative. He alone is competent to prescribe the terms on which he will hold communion with sinful beings; and he regards as vain and presumptuous, every pretence of honouring him which he hath not warranted. The sacrifice of blood and death, if an idea so revolting could have sprung up in a sinner's mind, could not have been offered to God without impiety, nor would he have accepted it, had not his own authority previously pointed the way by an explicit prescription.

“The goodness which pitied our first parents, in their fallen and degraded condition, furnished them with clothing from the skins of animals. It cannot, by any reasonable presumption, be supposed that those animals had been killed for food. The strong probability, therefore, is that the gracious Being who promised the Messiah as the woman's seed, confirmed the promise, and illustrated the doctrine of forgiveness through him, by the institution of sacrifices.

“Now all divine institutions are marked by the wisdom of their Author. The sabbath, the passover, the rite of baptism, and all other ordinances of worship, are significant and instructive: it is fair to infer that sacrifices were so too.

3. “The sentiments of those who practised sacrificial rites are in favour of our position.

“The ancient heathens universally attributed to sacrifices both significance and efficacy. The oldest representations of their sentiments and manners bear this testimony. Of the classical productions of the western nations, the works of Homer are the most ancient: and who, that has read his two exquisite poems, can be ignorant that by sacrifices, performed or promised, the gods were to be appeased, and the pardon of offences procured? The primitive idea of atonement, buried as it was under idolatrous corruptions, disgraced by superstitions, and polluted with atrocities, was not totally lost. Some of the philosophers, disgusted with the vulgar notions, or shocked at the apparent absurdity of a practice, the meaning and intent of which they knew not, expressed their surprise and disapprobation at so strange a mode of seeking the favour of the Deity: but tradition, uniting with the consciousness of guilt and the dread of punishment, had fixed the notion and practice in the minds of all nations too strongly to be eradicated by philosophic speculations. It was a doctrine held even by some of the Pythagoreans, that the purification of the soul, and its union with God, were effected by sacrifices and sacrificial fire.

“The modern Jews, through their aversion from Christianity has led them in various important points, to abandon the theology of their ancestors, have recognized statements on this subject which we may justly esteem valuable concessions. As a specimen of passages which might be adduced, the following is submitted to your attention from one of their most learned and approved writers, Isaac Abrabenal. ‘The blood of the offerer deserved to be shed, and his body to be burned, for his sin: only the merey of the [Divine] Name accept-

ed this offering from him as a substitute and propitiation, whose blood should be instead of his blood, and its life instead of his life.'

"These inferior authorities are valuable, inasmuch as they may be regarded as the distant emanations of primitive truth, communicated at first by the Author of truth himself. To this high source let us now carry our appeal. If, in his holy word, we find pointed declarations of the absolute inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, except connected with moral acts and dispositions; declarations addressed to the people whom he had commanded thus to worship him, and who could not neglect the observance without incurring his awful displeasure;—can we avoid the conclusion, that they were intended to inform the mind, and assist the faith, of the worshipper? Instances of such declarations in the Old Testament are obvious. 'For what purpose to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah. I am disgusted with the burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts: and in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats I delight not.' 'I hate, I despise your festivals; and I will not accept the odour [of sacrifices and incense] on your solemn days. Though ye present to me sacrifices and offerings, I will not accept them.'—'Sacrifice and offering thou desirest not:—burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin thou dost not require.'

"By these considerations it appears satisfactorily established that the intention and use of the ancient sacrifices was to be a SIGNIFICANT REPRESENTATION of spiritual and important truth, and that in this view they were understood by those who practised them."

Our next extract is from that part of this Discourse, in which the author undertakes to show, that all the objects which the typical sacrifices represented, are really effected by the sacrifice of Christ. This being a cardinal point in the system, an opportunity will be afforded to the reader, of forming an accurate judgment of Dr. Smith's method of treating the subject, and of his theological opinions, by what follows:—

1. "It is a demonstration of the most momentous and interesting truths, respecting the PERFECTIONS and GOVERNMENT of GOD.

"He is here manifested as the MOST HOLY ONE, irreconcilable to sin, of purer eyes than to behold evil, and in whose presence nothing that defileth shall ever stand. Had sin been pardoned and its guilt

cancelled, by the exercise of sovereign will, or by an act of mere power; it might have been doubted whether the Almighty were indeed infinite in moral rectitude; it might have been surmised that sin was not so extremely odious in his sight as his word represents, nor holiness so absolutely necessary to the happiness of a rational being. But no such injurious apprehensions can be entertained by those who devoutly study the divine purity as it appears in the doctrine of Christ crucified. Sin is pardoned, but it is not palliated. On the contrary, it is branded with a deeper and more awful mark of Jehovah's abhorrence than if no interposition of grace had been vouchsafed, but the weight of vengeance had fallen on the heads that deserved it.

“The JUSTICE of Heaven is displayed. This perfection of the Divine Nature is, indeed, but a necessary exercise of its essential and unchanging rectitude. ‘Justice is goodness directed by wisdom,’ says the judicious Bishop Stillingfleet. The same inspired word which tells us that God is love, tells us also that God is righteous, who taketh vengeance. And the positions are in perfect harmony. It is a necessary and honourable part of the goodness of God that he sets himself against sin. It is in the sufferings of the Saviour, as a sacrifice for the sins of those whom he hath loved, so as to give himself for them, that sin is most clearly shown to be deserving of all the detestation which the word of God expresses. The sincere Christian's abhorrence to sin is confirmed and increased, by every discoveries of its intrinsic demerit: but such discoveries he makes, in the most convincing and affecting manner, in looking to Jesus, who knew no sin, yet was made sin for us; the spotless and unblemished Victim, who bore our sins in his own body on the cross. Here, too, the persevering transgressor may meditate terror; for if God spared not his own Son, when, by a constitution of wise and holy mercy, he was numbered among the transgressors, what will be the end of those, whose personal and persevering guilt equally tramples on the authority of his law, and insults the grace of his gospel? ‘If these things were done in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?’

“The LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY of God is brought to view in its rightful honours. His law is shown to be of the most reasonable character, and of indissoluble obligation; for it is holy, just, and good. It is the expression of his own moral perfection, and he cannot permit it to be depreciated with impunity. It is the most moderate demand that can in any reason be imagined, of excellence which deserves thus to be honoured, and of dominion which requires thus

to be obeyed. A lower requirement cannot be conceived, without charging God with indifference to his perfection and dereliction of his honour. What does his law demand, but that HE should be loved and honoured *proportionably to his merit*? More he does not enjoin: less, it would be infinitely dishonourable in him to require or to accept. The righteousness of the requirement, and the correspondent equity of its sanction, are shown forth in their just glory by the obedience unto death of Jesus the Son of God. Put under the law, he hath magnified it and made it honourable, and is become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

“The glory of eternal wisdom is here manifested, in the formation of a moral constitution, by which the guilt and punishment of sin, so far as was necessary for the purposes of sacrificial atonement, were assumed by the sinless Victim; and the worth of his obedience and his sufferings becomes imputable, on grounds of right and reason, to the sinner who is brought to a cordial acquiescence in this plan of holiness and grace. The foundation of this divine constitution is laid in a *union* of nature and covenant relationship, between the meritorious Sufferer and those for whom he suffers, so that a reciprocal proprietorship is made to exist. Striking resemblances to such a constitution of things are not wanting in the visible government of providence: and whoever has attentively considered the amount of human knowledge on the subject of cause and effect, must, I think, of necessity admit that this doctrine of a moral union between Christ and his people rests upon an unshaken foundation of philosophical truth.

“Thus a way is opened for the exercise of MERCY and GRACE in a manner perfectly honourable to the attributes and government of God. He appears a just God and a Saviour: he is just, and yet he justifieth him that believeth in Jesus. And of all the condescensions of mercy, of all the gifts of divine generosity, can any be esteemed comparable with this? ‘God commendeth his love towards us, in that, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son, to be the propitiation for our sins!’”

2 “By the sacrifice of himself, Jesus Christ voluntarily SUSTAINED that suffering which was the marked PUNISHMENT of sin, and expressly with this view, He was ‘made a curse for us.’

“We have seen that the idea of substitution, or vicarious suffering, was essential to the theory of sacrifices, as understood and practised by profane and sacred antiquity, and as we have abundant reason to believe, originally instituted by God himself. Let us now

inquire whether the Scriptures do not, in clear and express terms, attribute the same idea to the suffering and death of our blessed Redeemer.

“The passages quoted under the foregoing head of this discourse, are all strictly in point as evidence for our present purpose; and their testimony appears to me so full, particular, and strong, that I am unable to conceive how it can be eluded in any other way than by assuming principles which would nullify the use of language, and destroy all means of moral certainty. I need not repeat those quotations; and the addition of further testimonies might seem superfluous. But different testimonies present the same truth in different points of view, so as to serve the purpose of mutual illustration: and these varied aspects are highly useful in their adaptation to men’s different mental constitutions. Let us keep in sight the precise point, for the evidence and illustration of which the following are adduced, and the preceding texts recollected: that, in virtue of the *union* constituted by the wisdom and grace of God, between the Saviour and mankind, he voluntarily *put himself in their place* and suffered as if he had been a transgressor, in order that they might be delivered from the guilt, or legal condemnation, of their sins, and, by consequence, from the pollution and practical power of sin.

“The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many. I am the good Shepherd: I lay down my life for the sheep: therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father.—This is my blood, the blood of the new covenant, the blood shed on the behalf of many, for the remission of sins.—To feed the church of the Lord which he hath acquired to himself by his own blood. In whom we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of our offences, according to the riches of his grace. Who gave himself for us, that he might ransom us from all iniquity. Who gave himself a ransom for all. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Who himself bare our sins, in his own body, on the cross: by whose stripes ye are healed. If one died for all then (*ἅπα*, in effect) did the all die;’ that is, upon the constitution of mediatorial grace, and relatively to the great ends of law. ‘Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. For him that knew no sin, [God] hath made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.—They fell down before the Lamb:—

and they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy,—for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood!

“Such is the current of the Scripture testimony to the nature, design, and end of the sufferings of Jesus the Messiah. These passages have been recited in their briefest form, and detached from their respective connection: but if the candid inquirer will study each of them in its proper place, and with the closest regard to the continuity of sentiment, it is my serious conviction that the impression made by this insulated representation will be confirmed and increased. A writer of eminence in the polite world, who knew extremely little of theological systems, but who, emerging from a careless infidelity, read the Scriptures with attention and good sense, has described, with regard to our present subject, the effect produced on his mind by such an unbiassed study of the sacred books. ‘That Christ suffered and died as an atonement for the sins of mankind, is a doctrine so constantly and so strongly enforced through every part of the New Testament, that whoever will seriously peruse those writings, and deny that it is there, may with as much reason and truth, after reading, the works of Thucydides and Livy, assert, that in them no mention is made of any facts, relative to the histories of Greece and Rome.

Indeed, I must sit down in hopeless scepticism, and abandon all reliance on evidence and reasoning, if I refuse to admit it as the doctrine taught in Scripture, that the Saviour of mankind voluntarily yielded himself a sacrifice of expiation, bearing the guilt and punishment of sin not his own: when prophets, and apostles, and his own supreme authority, concur in bearing this testimony to his sufferings and the glories that should follow.

“‘Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things?’ That is, was it not fit, proper, and necessary, in the eye of that All-perfect Being who had constructed the plan of human salvation; and who had so constructed it as to meet all the exigencies of the case, both with respect to the wants of the sinner, and the regards due to his own righteous government. The Saviour came to suffer. The chief part of his humiliation was his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. Throughout his mortal course, he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: but especially the closing scenes of his life were the accumulation of woe. Then was the hour of his enemies, and the power of darkness. We are incompetent to form a proper conception of the precise nature and the degree of suffering,

to which the dying Redeemer submitted. Excruciating were the pains inflicted on his bodily frame, which could not but be delicate and susceptible to a very high degree. But all these were light, compared with the distress of his holy soul. We may be assured, that the severity of his mental sufferings unspeakably exceeded the most affecting ideas that we can form. His agony and bloody sweat, his pungent sense of the triumphs of wickedness and the keen insults of finished malignity, the piercing of his heart by those whom he so generously loved, the bitter cries and supplications and tears which the wondrous Sufferer poured out to his Heavenly Father,—we, alas, can but very feebly and unworthily appreciate! Yet those were but the index of his internal and silent sorrows!

“With respect to the degree of intensity in the sufferings of Jesus, it could not have been less than it actually was, or assuredly it would have been. When the Righteous Father was pleased to crush him with that dreadful and fatal stroke, he still ceased not to delight in the Son of his love. One shade of grief would not have passed over his soul, which infinite holiness and wisdom did not perceive to be necessary. ‘It BECAME him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.’

“It is, I humbly conceive, worse than improper to represent the sufferings of Jesus Christ, in their last and most terrible extremity, as the same with those of condemned sinners in the state of punishment. In the case of such incorrigible and wretched criminals, there is a leading circumstance which could not, by any possibility, exist in the suffering Saviour. They ‘eat of the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices.’ A most material part of their misery consists in the unrestrained power of sinful passions, for ever raging but for ever ungratified. Their minds are constantly torn with the racking consciousness of personal guilt; with mutual aggravations and insults; with the remorse of despair: with malice, fury, and blasphemy against the Holy and Blessed God himself; and with an indubitable sense of Jehovah’s righteous abhorrence and rejection of them. No such passions as these, nor the slightest tincture of them, could have place in the breast of the Holy Jesus. That meek and purest Lamb offered himself without spot. His heart, though broken and bleeding with agonies to us unknown, ever felt a perfect resignation to the hand that smote him, and a full acquiescence in all the bitterness of the cup which was appointed him to drink: the resignation and acquiescence of love and conviction. He suffered in

such a manner as a being perfectly holy could suffer. Though, animated by the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame; yet there appear to have been seasons in the hour of his deepest extremity, in which he underwent the entire absence of divine joy and every kind of comfort or sensible support. What but a total eclipse of the sun of consolation, could have wrung from him that exceedingly bitter and piercing cry, 'My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?'—The fire of Heaven consumed the sacrifice. The tremendous manifestations of God's displeasure against sin he endured, though in him was no sin: and he endured them in a manner of which even those unhappy spirits who shall drink the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God, will never be able to form an adequate idea! They know not the HOLY and EXQUISITE SENSIBILITY which belonged to this immaculate Sacrifice. That clear sight of the transgressions of his people in all their heinousness and atrocity, and that acute sense of the infinite viltness of sin, its baseness, ingratitude, and evil in every respect which he possessed, must have produced, *in him*, a feeling of extreme distress, of a kind and to a degree which no creature, whose moral sense is impaired by personal sin can justly conceive. As such a feeling would accrue from the purity and ardour of his love to God and holiness, acting in his *perfectly peculiar* circumstances; so it would be increased by the pity and tenderness which he ever felt towards the objects of his redeeming love. A wise and good father is more deeply distressed by a crime which his beloved child has perpetrated, than by the same offence if committed by an indifferent person.

"It should also be considered that our doctrine concerning the design and the effect of the sufferings of Jesus, has not produced those sufferings. They are the same, and the facts are unalterable, whatever opinion be set up concerning their reason and moral cause, under the divine government. Which hypothesis, then, is the most worthy of the wisdom and benevolence of God; the one which attributes to the sufferings of our Lord, an effect beyond all description important and valuable, conferring infinite good upon innumerable myriads of beings, and spreading its beneficent influence through all eternity; or the other, which regards *the same* sufferings as nothing more than a proof of the sufferer's integrity, and an example of patient endurance, to be imitated by other sufferers if they should be so disposed?—Neither could the sufferings of Christ, if their expiatory quality be put out of the consideration, be of any service as a declaration of the general mercy of God, and his readiness to pardon sinners

upon repentance: for how could the analogy or the argument be constructed? Surely it would, in all reason, bear the contrary way. If that pure and spotless One, in whom the Father was ever well pleased, was pressed down with a load, so dreadful, not of outward sufferings only, but of an inward and mysterious anguish, the intense-ness of which we have no means nor power of computing; what must be expected to fall upon us, who are conscious of transgressions innumerable and unspeakable against the law and majesty of Heaven.

“Here let us pause, and admire, and adore. The sacrifice of Christ is not merely a great fact in history, nor merely a foundation for interesting reasonings on theological science; but it touches the most intimate feelings, it affects the highest welfare of every heart. How malignant must be that evil, that enormous and detestable evil, which the unerring wisdom of God sees unfit to be pardoned without this astonishing expiation! O that we may hate it with perfect hatred, and resist it with unremitting vigour! With what lowly adoration and admiring praises should we contemplate the eternal and infinite love of God, in providing such a sacrifice! Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace embrace each other.—Who can unfold the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge? This is the bread of life, which came down from heaven; his flesh which he gave for the life of the world. How great, beyond expression, was the condescension of the eternal Son of God, assuming our nature, bearing our griefs and sorrows, the penal consequences of our sins, and yielding up his own invaluable life under agonies unspeakable, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, from the guilt and power of our ruinous apostacy! ‘Hereby perceive we his love, that he laid down his life for us.—Unto him that loveth us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood,—be glory and dominion, for ever and ever!’

“We proceed to state a further effect of this great measure in the grace and government of God.

3. “The sacrifice of Christ is a full and perfect SATISFACTION to the honour and justice of the divine government in pardoning and saving sinners. In other words, it has effected a perfect RECONCILIATION and harmony between two apparently incompatible principles; on the one hand, the equity and wisdom of God’s moral legislation, in all the propriety of requirement, and the veracity of denunciation; and, on the other, the exercise of his benevolence, in rescuing from ruin, and restoring to holiness and happiness those of mankind whom,

out of a principle of sovereign and absolute grace, (not indeed arbitrarily, but for reasons infinitely weighty, though not revealed to mortals,) he may judge proper thus to bless.

“That some instances of sin, though only between fellow-creatures, have a real and proper *desert* of suffering as a penalty, few can so violate the dictates of reason and moral feeling, as to deny. In the universal estimation and the ordinary language of men, acts of deep and malicious injury, of enormous cruelty, perfidy, and ingratitude, call for *condign* punishment. If we were considerate and impartial enough to extend our views to the whole moral universe, including *in a due manner* its glorious and infinite Sovereign, we should be convinced that HIS claims on the entire affection and devoted obedience of his rational creatures are infinitely superior to those of an earthly parent, friend, or benefactor, under any conceivable circumstances; that a violation of those claims has a *proportionate* criminality; and that on the principles of equal justice, every such violation deserves an adequate punishment. On the question, *what* punishment is *adequate*, can any one be so bold as to deny that God alone is the perfect, competent, and unexceptionable Judge? And if, in his accredited revelation, he has informed us of the result of that unimpeachable judgment, is it wise, or safe, or pious, for us to entertain a different opinion? The Scriptures are full of solemn declarations of God’s punitive justice. He has both affirmed the claim of eternal righteousness, and declared his resolution to carry it into execution. ‘Wilt thou, forsooth, condemn UNBOUNDED JUSTICE?—According to a man’s work, will he render unto him: and according to the ways of a man shall it befall him. Woe unto the wicked! Ill to him! For the retribution of his works shall be done to him. The judgment of God is righteous, and according to truth. He is righteous in taking vengeance. Vengeance is mine; I will repay; saith the Lord. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’ He will treat sin, and deal with sinners *as they deserve*, but not *beyond* the measure of their desert. ‘Justice and judgment,’ not blind passion, ‘are the foundation of his throne.’ The most cursory reader of the divine word, must be aware how much and how strongly it speaks of the deep, fixed, unalterable, and infinitely terrible DISPLEASURE of the great Jehovah against sin. The most vehement expressions are borrowed from the affections, actions, and language of mankind to set before us this all-important idea. We are assured, in the most awakening terms, of the anger, the indignation, the wrath, the fury, of God against sin and sinners. Every one must admit that this is the

language of condescension to the weakness of human conceptions, under the necessary circumstances of a primitive language, when men had not proceeded to the invention of more abstract and philosophical terms; and that it must be understood in a manner congruous with the perfection of the Divine Nature. No agitations or emotions, no mutability of knowledge or will, can be for a moment admitted. A careful survey of the whole testimony of the Scriptures, in this view, will show us that the design of these awfully sublime expressions is to represent to us God's necessary and infinite abhorrence of moral evil; and his determination to give all suitable evidences or expressions of that abhorrence. Those expressions must be *public*, or they would not answer the end of vindicating the divine righteousness: and they must be of such a kind, and enforced to such a degree, as shall be *adequate* to all the purposes of divine wisdom. But it is evident that, of the measure which shall constitute adequacy, God alone can judge, and fix it with the perfection of rectitude.

That sin, then, should be punished according to its desert, the supremacy, holiness, justice, and veracity, of the Most High absolutely require. But how can it be consistent with those perfections to punish the innocent?—Unquestionably it would be wrong to punish the innocent, as innocent, and irrespectively of any relative or compensative arrangement by which the party, though personally blameless, might suffer to the advantage of the whole case in judgment, and without ultimate injury to himself or to any. If such an instance as included these conditions could be found, the objection would in that case be disarmed. What parent would not undergo the severest labours, difficulties, and sufferings, to save a dear child from calamity or death?—And, even with regard to the affairs of the present life, the all-wise dominion of Providence not infrequently exhibits instances of individuals plunged into extreme distress and acute sufferings, in consequence of faults, in the commission of which they had no share: and still more commonly and extensively, are men, even to a remote posterity, benefited by the virtues of others, to which they have not contributed in the smallest degree. Though such cases fall infinitely short of a parallelism to the grand instance of Redemption by the Sacrifice of Christ, yet they serve to show that the notion of moral substitution has its foundation in the constitutions of nature, as fixed by the Almighty Author.

The second of these Discourses, is ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST. The former part of it contains a critical expli-

cation of all the titles given to Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews. These are, A PRIEST—A HIGH PRIEST—A GREAT PRIEST—A MESSENGER—A MINISTER OF THE SANCTUARY—THE LORD—A SANCTIFIER—A BROTHER—A SURETY—A MEDIATOR—AN AUTHOR—A SAVIOUR—AN INTERCESSOR—A SHEPHERD—THE SON OF GOD. This extended series of critical remarks, will be considered by most readers, as tedious and uninteresting. We had particular reference to this Discourse, in the remarks before made, respecting the structure of these Discourses.

Under the appellation, MEDIATOR, the learned author attempts an exegesis of two of the most difficult passages in the Bible. The first is, Gal. iii. 20. *Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.* The paraphrase of this text, which is the result of Dr. Smith's critical investigation, is given in the following words:—

“(V. 19.) In the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, an intervening agent between God and the people was employed, namely, Moses. (v. 20.) But such an intervening agent does not belong to any single party. Had the revelation made on Sinai been a promulgation of simple law, there could have been no such interposer; for in the declaration of authoritative commands, the superior person acts a part purely sovereign. He issues his mandate, and he expects unqualified obedience. Had, therefore, the declaration from Sinai been such, God would have given it immediately from himself. But, on that occasion, he was pleased to act as ONE of two parties treating with each other. (See Deut. v. 5, 23, 27, 28.) So that the employment of Moses in this service of intervention between Jehovah and the Hebrew nation, was a kind condescension to the distress and the fears of the people, was an act of special grace, and was an intimation of still greater mercy to be shown to sinners. (v. 21—24.) Therefore the Law of Sinai is not contradictory to the design of the Gospel: for, though it could not give pardon and spiritual blessedness, it was admirably adapted to serve as a preparatory arrangement for the introduction and illustration of that glorious and effective grace which shines in the Gospel of Christ.”

The other passage explained, is, Heb. ix. 15—17. On this, the remarks of the author are too long and too undecisive, to make it proper to insert them here.

The latter part of this second Discourse, considers *the properties and descriptive characters* which are attributed to the Priesthood of Christ: These properties are, 1. *It is unique.* 2. *Perfect.* 3. His sacrifice was *expiatory* and *propitiatory.* 4. Is continually *presented*, by his intercession, and is therefore *ever valid and efficacious.* 5. The effects produced by this glorious arrangement of divine wisdom, holiness, and grace, are stated to be the following:—

1. "Ratifying the gospel-covenant, that is, the revealed purpose and plan of God for the salvation of sinful and justly-condemned mankind. vii. 22. viii. 6. ix. 15. x. 7—9.

2. "Christ's enjoying the rewards due from the righteousness of the divine government, to his meritorious obedience. Of these rewards, the most grand and gratifying to his exalted benevolence is, the *right of conferring infinite and everlasting blessings* upon an inconceivable multitude of sinful and otherwise lost men, in unison with securing and displaying the brightest glory of the divine perfections; v. 9. vii. 25. ix. 14, 15, 28. x. 10—18; besides other passages and the general tenour of the Epistle, all leading us to continue 'looking unto Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith, who FOR THE JOY that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.' xii. 2. 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of RIGHTEOUSNESS is the sceptre of thy kingdom! Thou hast loved righteousness and hast hated iniquity: THEREFORE, O God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy companions!' i. 8, 9. See also Matt. xi. 27. Joh. i. 12. xvii. 2.

3. "The legal *reconciliation* of God and all sinners who cordially receive the Gospel method of salvation. This all-important idea is presented under two aspects.

(1.) "*Expiation* or *atonement.* This denotes the doing of something which shall furnish a *just ground* or *reason* in a system of judicial administration, for *pardoning* a convicted offender.

(2.) "*Propitiation:* any thing which shall have the property of disposing, inclining, or causing the judicial authority to *admit* the ex-

piation; *i. e.* to assent to it as a valid reason for pardoning the offender.

“Expiation, therefore, regards the condition of the offender; propitiation, that of the judge or sovereign. We can conceive cases in which an expiation, good and reasonable in its kind, might be offered, and yet a wise and good government might not be willing to accept it; *i. e.* might not be *propitious* to the offender and to the proposal for his being forgiven. We can also conceive of a wise and good government being cordially disposed and greatly desirous to pardon an offender; but unable to gratify its gracious disposition, because it can find *no just grounds* for such an act, and it is aware that a pardon arbitrary and destitute of just reason, would relax the obligations of law, bring dishonour upon public justice, and prove of pernicious example throughout the whole community.

“It is also obvious that *the same* thing may be, and is most naturally fit and likely to be, *both* an expiation and a propitiation; *i. e.* be both a valid *reason* for pardoning and determining *motive* to the will of the competent authority to admit and act upon that reason.

Now, in applying these terms, to the great and awful case of ourselves, the whole world of justly condemned sinners, and our Judge, the infinitely Perfect God, there are some cautions of great importance to be observed.

(1.) “Nothing can be admitted that would contradict incontrovertible first principles. But there are two such principles, which are often violated by inconsiderate advocates of the doctrine of salvation by the mediation of Christ; and the violation of them has afforded the advantage of all the plausible arguments urged against that doctrine by its adversaries.

“The first is, the Immutability of God. His moral principles, that is his rectitude, wisdom, and goodness, as expressed by his blessed and holy *will*, can undergo no alteration; for to admit such a supposition would be destructive of the ABSOLUTE PERFECTION of the divine nature, as it would imply either an improvement or a deterioration in the subject of the supposed change. We cannot, therefore, hear, or read, without unspeakable disapprobation and regret, representations of the Deity as first actuated by the passions of wrath and fury towards sinful men, and as afterwards turned, by the presentation of the Saviour’s sacrifice, into a different temper, a disposition of calmness, kindness, and grace.

“The second foundation-principle is, that the adorable God is, from eternity and in all the glorious constancy of his nature, gracious and

merciful. He wants no extraneous motive to induce him to pity and relieve our miserable world. No change in God is necessary or desirable, if even it were possible. This is abundantly evident from many parts of the divine word: *e. g.* Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. John iii. 16. vi. 39. x. 17. Eph. i. 3—10. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

(2.) "This great concern is entirely one of Law and Administrative Wisdom. The great God is, in the unalterable nature of things, and from the necessary volitions of an infinitely perfect mind, the Righteous Ruler of the universe, intellectual as well as physical. Over the latter he rules according to certain fixed principles, some of which he has enabled mortals to discover; and they have called them *Laws of nature*. Over the universe of intellectual beings, who act from volitions and are governed by motives, he rules also according to certain fixed principles; and these are the *Laws of the moral world*. Our knowledge of them is derived from himself; partly as he has implanted them in the moral instincts of our mental nature, partly as he has made them discoverable by our reasoning powers, and partly as he has given them clear expression by the voice of revelation.

"The question, whether sinners shall be pardoned, is not one that can be referred to arbitrary will or absolute power. It is a question of law and government, and it is to be solved by the dictates of wisdom, goodness, justice, and consistency. God's disposition to show mercy is original and unchangeable: in this sense nothing is needed to *render* him propitious. But the way and manner, in which it will be suitable to all the other considerations proper to be taken into the account, that he should show mercy, *none but HIMSELF is qualified to determine*. To deny this would be manifest folly and impiety. Now we have found, and the design of this volume is to present the evidence on the case, that *HE has determined*, and has given us to know that pardoning and restoring mercy shall be exercised in the way of *mediation and expiation*.

"From these facts it clearly follows, that a phrasology derived from the administration of government and law is proper and necessary, in all our considerations upon this, the most momentous and interesting of all concerns. 'God is the Righteous Judge: and God is angry [with the wicked] every day.' But this anger is not a commotion or a mutable passion: it is the calm, dignified, unchangeable, and eternal majesty of the JUDGE; it is his *necessary* love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity. In this his rectoral capacity, therefore, the maintenance of law, the enforcement of equity in relation to the unchangeable distinction of right and wrong, is not a matter of neutrality or of

option; and it involves the necessity of marking sin with a *suitable* demonstration of its moral evil and of the displeasure with which it is regarded by the Eternal Jehovah; and *this* is *punishment*. The execution of such punishment, which having been determined by unerring goodness and wisdom, cannot but be strictly proper, must follow in the regular course of moral antecedents and consequents. The promulgation of this course is a *threatening*; and it is rendered proper by a regard equally to the honour of the government and to the benefit of the governed. Threatening and punishment impress justly and necessarily with the idea of the displeasure of the Lawgiver and Judge. Pardon, when, on any consideration, it takes place, brings the true and just idea of a *change*: but that change, in the great case, before us, is not in the mind or character of the Supreme Ruler; but it is in the administration of his government, and in those outward acts by which that administration is indicated. This change is, in the order of moral right, the effect of an adequate *cause*. This cause lies in the whole Mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ, but most particularly and essentially in his sufferings and death; and these have constituted the EXPIATION.

“Let it also be remembered that this method of ‘*grace reigning through righteousness*’ has not come from any extraneous influence, in its invention, suggestion, or operation. It is the pure and sole emanation of the FATHER’s *infinite, eternal, and unchangeable LOVE*. It is the exercise of *free and sovereign beneficence*.

“It also follows that the terms *anger, indignation, wrath, sentence, threatening, punishment, remission, reconciliation, propitiation*, and similar expressions, are, under all the circumstances, most proper to be employed, and are the best calculated to produce a just sense of the evil of sin, and many other salutary feelings; yet that we should be careful to understand them as expressing *modes* of the divine administration, and *effects* of the divine counsels, but *not affections operating upon* the Divine Nature, nor *changes* in it. A creature who is under the guilt and dominion of sin, stands in that position, with respect to the necessary and unchangeable attributes of God, which is fitly expressed by terms denoting the strongest displeasure and abhorrence. A change of state and character, so as to be brought into a new set of relations to the divine attributes, is as fitly expressed by the language of love and approbation. For example: ‘God is jealous and the Lord revengeth, the Lord revengeth and is furious, the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.—Who can stand before his indignation?—The Lord is good, a strong

hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.' Nahum i. 3—7. 'And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee; for thou wast angry with me; thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me!' Is. xii. 1. Upon a different application of the same general principle, the varied dispensations of God's righteous providence towards his sincere yet imperfect people are represented by similar expressions, yet all referring to modes and effects of the divine administration. 'O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away!' Dan ix. 16. 'Thus saith thy Lord, Jehovah, even thy God who pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt not drink it any more.' Is. li. 22. Yet we are not warranted to understand such passages as these, as indicating a real change in God; any more than we should be to believe that he is the subject of hope, of fear, of precarious expectation, of wishes, of disappointment, and of regrets, because, in condescension of human infirmity, and to the state of mental culture in the infancy of the human race, the external forms of the divine dispensations are described in language borrowed from those affections in men: *e. g.* Gen. ii. 19. iii. 22. vi. 6. Deut. xxxii. 19, 27, 29. Is. v. 4, and many other passages.

The *change* by which a guilty and polluted sinner becomes freed from the sentence of condemnation, pardoned, regarded with complacency, and qualified for the noblest employments and delights, *is not in God*; but it is in the *relations* under which the sinner stands towards God, and in the state of *his own mind and character* consequent upon those altered relations."

The title of the third Discourse, is, ON THE ATONEMENT MADE BY CHRIST. But this will furnish the reader with no correct idea of the subjects treated. It should have been entitled, THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT, as will appear by the following table of its contents;—The divine moral government—The spirit of the moral law—Its grounds and reasons—Nature and distributions of holiness—Nature of sin—Essential principles of happiness—Obligations to obedience—Disobedience—Effects of violated obligation—Justice of the divine government—Punishment, natural and positive—Depravity and

guilt of the human race—The conceivable results of the moral condition of man—A compensation and Mediatorial system.

This Discourse gives evidence of a mind accustomed to profound and just thinking. It is replete with sound doctrine; and the truths here presented, are traced to their first principles. Our only objection has already been stated. Every thing is rendered too abstract. Principles of reason are resorted to, rather than the plain unequivocal declarations of Scripture. It may be alleged, indeed, that those with whom our author contends, will not admit our interpretation of the plainest texts which speak of atonement; but will they more readily acquiesce in the conclusions derived from abstract reasoning? But we would not be understood, as expressing dissatisfaction with this able Discourse. It is, upon the whole, truly excellent. But our limits will not admit of making any extracts; and indeed, the principles exhibited, are so connected together, that it must be preserved entire, and read in connexion, in order to see the bearing and force of the argument. But we would earnestly recommend the careful and repeated perusal of this Discourse, to theological students. It contains, undoubtedly, the true principles on which the doctrine of the vicarious sufferings or atonement of Christ, is founded.

On some points, disputed among the orthodox themselves,—the author speaks in a vague and unsatisfactory manner; but these are things of small importance, when compared with the great radical doctrine, which is so ably sustained, in this Discourse.

The fourth and last of these Discourses, is, ON THE REDEMPTION EFFECTED BY CHRIST. The object of the learned author, here, is to vindicate from the cavils and objections of opposers, those numerous words and phrases, in which allusion is made to pecuniary or commercial transactions. This Discourse is short, and, for the most part, critical.

The words referred to above, are taken up in detail; their import ascertained; and the common objections made to this mode of representing the work of Christ and blessings of salvation, are answered.

The remainder of the volume—about 100 pages in small type—is occupied with notes and Illustrations, replete with learning and criticism, and calculated to shed light on the points discussed in the preceding Discourses.