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Wm. H. Goold
ART. I.—*The works of John Owen, D. D.* Edited by the
Rev. William H. Goold, Edinburgh. New York: Carter
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THAT this is the best edition of Owen's works, we do not doubt for a moment. It is identical as to every letter and point with the Edinburgh edition of Messrs. Johnstone and Hunter, everywhere known for the beautiful impressions which they have produced, under the auspices of the Free Church. The series of volumes is rapidly coming out, and five have already appeared. For such a book, the price is surprisingly low. What is of more importance, the edition is a critical one, under the eye and hand of a clergyman of Edinburgh, Mr. Goold, who unites for his task several admirable qualities; extensive reading, accurate scholarship, a turn for minute collation, indefatigable labour, and a thorough acquiescence in the theology of the seventeenth century.

It was fit that the great Puritan champion should be introduced to our generation by a Calvinist and a Presbyterian, rather than by any laxer descendant of the nonconformists, who, if they should revisit their old haunts, would scarcely recognize their ancient Independency among the Congregationalists of England.

In regard to the editorial care which has been bestowed on this enterprise, we learn something from the work itself, and something from other sources. The towering reputation of Owen led to efforts towards an edition of his collected works as early as 1721, under the patronage of Asty, Nesbitt, Matthew Clarke, Ridgely, and Bradbury. One folio volume appeared, and thus the affair ended. It was dedicated to the venerable Sir John Hartopp, the friend of Owen, to whose stenography we owe some of our best samples of the great preacher's extempore discourses. The life was by Asty. It was inaccurate, and, as Cotton Mather said, did not "contain so many pages as Owen has written books." Though it was the age of weighty tomes, which a man could hardly lift, οἷος ἑνὸς βροτοῦ εἶσι, it could not sustain so ponderous an undertaking. The exposition of the Hebrews, of itself, was four folios. Yet Manton's works had been gathered into five such volumes, Goodwin's into as many, Charnock's, Flavel's, and Howe's, into two each, and Bates's into one. The first successful effort was that of Mr. Baynes, under the editorial charge of Mr. Russell, a dissenting minister near London. It reached twenty-one octavo volumes, including Mr. Orme's Memoir. This edition, begun in 1826, is the one which is seen on the shelves of our scholars; but the cost was great, and it has long since been scarce in the market, so as abundantly to justify the Scottish publishers in essaying a new reprint on more moderate terms.

We rise from the examination of these volumes with high respect and unusual satisfaction. Everything that Mr. Goold has done commends our approval, and as much are we thankful for his wise reserve, as for his care and learning. Only those who have worked for the press, losing sleep and health at the slavish comparison of texts and lections, worrying out the meaning of hopeless periods, reforming incompatible orthographies, and threading the maze of preposterous punctuation, and perspiring over proofs and revises, can render due credit to the editorial toil. The work has found a workman fitted to his task. Former editions had been grossly inaccurate. In some of the works, printers had persisted in following some impression indescribably corrupt, in preference to later copies

corrected by the living author. It is believed that few writers have suffered more from this sort of mangling, than John Owen, and few could endure it less; for he wrote rapidly, published in troublous times, and was characteristically careless of little things. This is an affair in which, as every literary observer knows, bad continually grows worse. Consequently which of us is there, who has not been both amused and vexed at the inextricable tangle of sentences in the smaller reprints? The author himself was betrayed into lamentation over the plight to which his "Theologoumena" came to him, "nobis a prelo a capite ad calcem operis absentibus." And he jocosely annexes the following note to his "Death of Death." "I must inform the reader, that I cannot own any of his censures until he shall have corrected these errata, and allowed besides many grains for literal faults, viz: *parius* for *parvus*, *let* for *set*, *him* for *them*, and the like; also mispointing and false accenting of Greek words, occasioned by my distance from the press; and something else, of which it would be too much tyranny in making the printer instrumental in the divulging." Even the saturnine face of criticism melts into a smile over the Oxford edition of our authorized version, in 1717, known as the "Vinegar Edition," because in Luke xiii. 7, we read, "Then said he unto the dresser of his *vinegar*, Behold these three years," &c. But perhaps the instance given by droll Cotton Mather will be regarded as climacteric; who thus prefaces the final table of errata in his *Magnalia*: "The Holy Bible itself, in some of its editions, hath been affronted with scandalous errors in the press-work; and in one of these they so printed these words, Psalm cxix. 161, '*Printers* have persecuted me without a cause.'"

The present editor deals reverently with the author's text, in the spirit of that honest exactness which happily marks the criticism of this century. The standard of collation has been some edition which may have engaged the author's eye. Necessary additions are enclosed in brackets. Slight grammatical inaccuracies are corrected, but no liberties are taken with antique phraseology. The words and style are Owen's; as should be the case in every edition for the learned. The shocking punctuation of the seventeenth century, made more annoying

by careless compositors, has been amended. Even the italics have been put back into the text, in cases where they had a significancy of emphasis. The ones, twos, and threes, of the author's endless divisions, have been made conformable to an intelligible enumeration; no small endeavour, as any sedulous reader can attest. The scripture quotations have been revised, and the numerous passages from the Fathers have, so far as was possible, been verified and duly noted. These are the points which make a reader secure and satisfied in reading an edition, and which lead us to give this edition the preference to all others.

After ascertaining and perpetuating a true text, it remained for the editor to elucidate the contents. Here one must steer nicely between a show of help by scanty unimportant scholia, and a mass of pedantic and overloading annotation. Mr. Goold has borne sternly towards the side of modest frugality; but with equal learning and judgment. So far as we have observed in five volumes, he has touched the felicitous mean. His remarks prefatory to the several treatises are sufficient to indicate their drift and furnish their history. Some of the ecclesiastical and literary anecdotes which his long familiarity with famous libraries has here supplied, are novel and illustrative. His notes in the margin have, with scarcely an exception, taken us back to the text with increased understanding, and we need scarcely add, they are always favourable to old theology, in its strict interpretation. If the keen and vigilant Presbyterian sometimes looks forth from the foot of the page, we are not the men to complain. A complete Index is promised. A valuable Memoir, in flowing but condensed style, is furnished by the Rev. Andrew Thomson. The treatises are arranged in three grand divisions, as Doctrinal, Practical, and Controversial. If there should be a demand, these volumes will be followed by the *Theologoumena* and the *Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. The whole work is purchased in America at five dollars for four volumes.

Thus have we endeavoured to apprise our readers of what they may hope for, in this newest edition of John Owen's writings. But we seize the occasion to add a few remarks on the treatises themselves, and especially on those already issued;

in the confident expectation that some who have despaired of gaining benefit from a rare and voluminous author, and others who have not adverted to his merits, will take occasion to provide themselves with the whole. The volumes before us are, by number, the first, second, fifth, eighth, and ninth; the first three respectively concerning Christ, the Trinity, and Justification, and the remainder containing Sermons.

The first volume is chiefly occupied by two immortal works; one on the Person of Christ, the other on the Glory of Christ. The *Christologia*, or Declaration of the glorious mystery of the Person of Christ, God and Man, was first published in 1679, when Owen was about sixty-three. It rather assumes than undertakes to prove, the dogmatic points as to Christ's proper divinity; it shows this fundamental doctrine in its relation to other truths, and its bearing on inward experience. The author with his usual sagacity foresaw the prevalence of Unitarian corruptions. "Events justified these apprehensions of Owen. A prolonged controversy on the subject of the Trinity arose, which drew forth the works of Bull (1685), Sherlock (1690), and South (1695). In 1710, Whiston was expelled from Oxford for his Arianism. Dr. S. Clarke, in 1712, published Arian views, for which he was summoned before the Convocation. Among the Presbyterian Dissenters, Pierce and Hallet (1717) became openly committed to Arianism." In addition to what we have quoted from the editor, we earnestly commend to every reader who concerns himself with the annals of degraded doctrine in England, the life of Waterland prefixed to his works, and written by Bishop Van Mildert; a treatise rather of doctrine-history and the literature of British Christology, than a biography of the great dialectic warrior and worthy successor of Bull. Particularly would we refer to this masterly dissertation, and to this treatise of Owen, those novices in theological polemics, who imagine that the knots of this perplexed line of reasoning were undiscovered until the days of the Connecticut controversy. *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*. Dr. McCrie ranked this treatise and its pendant next after Calvin's Institutes. Owen ends his preface by words of Jerome which show its temper; "Sive legas, sive scribas, sive vigiles, sive dormias, amor tibi semper

buccina in auribus sonet, hic lituus excitet animam tuam, hoc amore furibundus, quære in lectulo tuo, quem desiderat anima tua."

The other treatise is on the Glory of Christ. If we should speak our mind, we should declare it one of the most remarkable effusions of a great and transported mind, at the threshold of heaven, which the Church has ever seen. It is theology fired with spiritual love. It was Owen's dying testimony, penned "for the exercise of his own mind." On the day of his death, when a friend said to him, "Doctor, I have just been putting your book on the Glory of Christ to the press;" he replied, "I am glad to hear that that performance is put to the press; but O, brother Payne, the long looked-for day is come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done yet, or was capable of doing in this world." It would be a token for good, if our younger ministers should be found possessed of a relish for such a treatise as this, in which they would find a theological vigour and discipline that none ever surpassed, united with a spirituality, unction, and sublimity, equally rare in the modern pulpit.

The second volume, on the Trinity, contains the well known treatise on Communion with God, a Vindication of the same, and an essay of about seventy-five pages on the Doctrine of the Trinity. No performance of Dr. Owen is more full of his peculiarities than that on Communion; none is likely to be more unpalatable to readers of wavering theology, and superficial experience. Its conclusions startle those who have learnt from recent exegesis to treat the Song of Solomon as an expression of amatory warmth. But as some are found even now to prize the letters of Samuel Rutherford, the same class will not undervalue a writer who like Rutherford was equally at home in the niceties of scholastic distinction, the strategy of polemic defence, and the raptures of divine contemplation. The book appeared in 1657, after Owen's vice-chancellorship at Oxford, and was the summary of pulpit exercises, extending over some years of pastoral teaching. Our editor remarks with justice, that the term Communion, used in the title, denotes not merely the interchange of feeling between God in his gracious character and a soul in a gracious state,

but the gracious relationship upon which this holy relationship is founded; which will account for the strong admixture of doctrine with the details of evangelical emotion. The leading topic, however, is the illustration of a distinct fellowship with each adorable person of the Trinity. The doctrine thus avowed was regarded by many at the time as "a new-fangled one and uncouth." The public for whom it was addressed was unlike our own religious world, and could relish both the erudition and the experience.

Citations of classic and patristic Latin and Greek, and copious adduction of Hebrew originals, rabbinical glosses and sentences of school-doctors, stand side by side with fervid description of evangelical raptures, and the longing of divine affection. Something of the same blending of scholarship and seraphic love is seen in the voluminous *Saint's Rest* of Baxter, in its unabridged form. But all readers were not Puritans, and the work was assailed; which gave occasion to the vindication against Sherlock, which stands second in this volume.

William Sherlock was father of the more celebrated Dr. Thomas Sherlock, Bishop of London. His attack on Owen was delayed until the work had been seventeen years before the public. He charged on it enthusiastic teachings such as we attribute to the Quakers; as that divine knowledge is to be obtained from the person of Christ, apart from the truth revealed in the Scriptures. But his objections were made to cut widely and deeply into the limbs and vitals of evangelical truth, and revealed an enmity against the entire body of Calvinistic divinity. Sherlock impugns vindicatory justice, which was Owen's citadel for the defence of expiatory atonement. He ridicules the notion of being saved by acquiescing in a plan of grace which leaves nothing to be wrought by the believer. He denies the soul's personal union with Christ, as mystical and absurd. He derides the forensic imputation of Christ's righteousness. In short, he anticipates almost all the cavils of American new-divinity; and we wish those who employ his spent missiles would give heed to the vigorous argument by which they are retorted. In many respects the apology is more fitted to our time than the offensive treatise which preceded it. It deals more with the cardinal points of dogmatics; it bears

more marks of ripe discipline, and it glows with the zeal of a man aroused by unjust attack. A spirit of bold conviction pervades the reasoning, which necessarily takes a wide sweep over the principal heads of theology. "Truth and good company," says Owen, "will give a modest man a little confidence sometimes." The war extended itself. "Robert Ferguson, in 1675, wrote against Sherlock a volume entitled 'The Interest of Reason in Religion,' etc. Edward Polhill followed, in an 'Answer to the Discourse of Mr. William Sherlock,' etc. Vincent Alsop first displayed in this controversy his powers of wit and acumen as an author, in his 'Antisozzo, or Sherlocismus Enervatus.' Henry Hickman, a man of considerable gifts, and pastor of an English congregation at Leyden, wrote the 'Speculum Sherlockianum,' etc. Samuel Rollè, a nonconformist, wrote the 'Prodromus, or the Character of Mr. Sherlock's Book;' and also, in the same controversy, 'Justification Justified.' Thomas Danson, who had been ejected from Sibton, and author of several works against the Quakers, wrote 'The Friendly Debate between Satan and Sherlock,' and afterwards he published again in defence of it. Sherlock, in 1675, replied to Owen and Ferguson in his 'Defence and Continuation of the Discourse concerning the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.' He was supported by Thomas Hotchkis, rector of Staunton, in a 'Discourse concerning the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness,' etc." A second part of the work by Hotchkis, in 1678, has been discovered by Mr. Goold, in addition to Orme's search, and also two more by Sherlock, "An Answer to Thomas Danson's Scandalous Pamphlet," 1677, and a "Vindication of Mr. Sherlock against the Cavils of Mr. Danson."

The short "Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity" has been widely circulated. It appeared in 1669. Among other signs of acceptance, it was translated into Dutch. It was written for the use of ordinary Christians, which will account for the absence of abstruse argument and heavy learning. The doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction, elsewhere so largely handled by Owen, is here discussed in a more familiar way, against the Socinianism which had already made havock in the continent, and was creeping in among the English, as it has since weakened and defiled the theology of some in our own country who

build the sepulchres of their Puritan fathers. In this popular essay, Owen condenses the matter which may be viewed in mass in his *Exercitations, Commentary, and answer to Biddle.*

The fifth volume, which is the next in order, contains the great work on *Justification*. In regard to this we cannot do better than to borrow from Mr. Goold's prefatory note. Socinus and Bellarmine both wrote against this article "*stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ.*" The work of the great Romish controvertist still remains to overshadow many later and feebler antagonists of the truth; and Owen scarcely ever fails to keep his eye upon this subtle and audacious polemic. But there were domestic errors also, which tended to shape the course of the argument. In 1649 Baxter published "*Aphorisms on Justification,*" with a view to certain prevalent Antinomian abuses. Though a holy man, and though at a later date less erroneous, he erred in this book, as elsewhere, by needless and useless compromises. To these *Aphorisms* Bishop Barlow traces the first departure from the received doctrine of the Reformed churches on the subject of justification. In 1669, Bishop Bull, in his "*Apostolical Harmony,*" declares that "faith denotes the whole condition of the gospel covenant; that is, comprehends in one word all the works of Christian piety." How strange the cyclical motion by which again and again this violent hypothesis comes into sight in the progress of theology! This is indeed to be justified by works under the denomination of faith. Baxter and Bull are great names; many rose to answer them. They were supported by many. Among these was Sir Charles Wolsley, in his "*Justification Evangelical,*" (1667). Sir Charles says somewhere to a correspondent concerning Owen, "I suppose you know his book of *Justification* was written particularly against mine." Owen's work appeared in 1677. But it is no ephemeral contribution. In Socinus and Bellarmine he had a nobler quarry than the baronet and parliament-man; and in bringing down these he generally did the work for all, of that day and of this. "On his own side of the question," says the editor, "it is still the most complete discussion in our language of the important doctrine to which it relates." "A curious fact," says Mr. Orme, "respecting this book, is mentioned in the *Life of Mr.*

Joseph Williams of Kidderminster:—‘At last, the time of his (Mr. Grimshawe’s, an active clergyman of the Church of England) deliverance came. At the house of one of his friends he lays his hand on a book, and opens it, with his face towards a pewter shelf. Instantly his face is saluted with an uncommon flash of heat. He turns to the title page, and finds it to be Dr. Owen on Justification. Immediately he is surprised with such another flash. He borrows the book, studies it, is led into God’s method of justifying the ungodly, hath a new heart given unto him; and now, behold, he prayeth!’ Whether these flashes were electrical or galvanic, as Southey in his Life of Wesley supposes, it deserves to be noticed that it was not the *flash* but the *book* which converted Grimshawe. The occurrence which turned his attention to it, is of importance merely as the second cause, which, under the mysterious direction of Providence, led to a blessed result.”

Owen’s purpose in writing this extraordinary work is fully expressed by himself. He says truly that it is vain to recommend the doctrine of justification to such as neither desire nor endeavour to be justified. It was not therefore a diatribe *ad scholas*. “I lay more weight on the steady direction of one soul in this inquiry, than on disappointing the objections of twenty wrangling or fiery disputers.” “It is the practical direction of the consciences of men, in their application unto God by Jesus Christ for deliverance from the curse due unto the apostate, and peace with him, with the influence of the way thereof unto universal gospel obedience, that is alone designed in the handling of this doctrine.” Yet it would be a sad error to infer from this that the book is experimental or practical in any such sense as not to be learned. There is nothing extant of theological erudition or dialectic skill and strength, which attains a higher degree than this treatise. A system of dogmatic history on this and allied points might be digested from its pages. He pursues the great professor, cardinal, and controvertist of Romanism through all his *ambages*. He shows himself familiar with the whole tenor of scholastic argument, and cites with freedom and understanding Lombard, Aquinas, and Anselm. He is equally at home among the Socini and the Polish Brethren. He lived among writers in English who had

brought out all the strength of the Pelagian and Arminian objections, and it is little to say that he knew them *intus et in cute*. But his power is shown most of all in exegesis of Scripture, and this will surprise no one who has ever used his commentary on the Hebrews in the way of perpetual collation with later interpreters. We hold a dogmatic head to be as necessary a propædeutic to exposition as a multiform learning in philology; and Owen had both, according to his times. If he maintained an error against Walton and was defeated, it was a prejudice of reverence, and was common to the best men of his day. Raised on the shoulders of giants we see further than he; but we must feel humble when we measure his greatness even in regard to Hebrew and Greek lexicography, grammar, and hermeneutics. It is precisely in the analysis of hard places, and the enucleation of consistent senses, by the aid of united learning, acumen and judgment, that he overtops all later commentators.

The entire subject of Justification is treated in detail. Here is discussed all that relates to those nice questions touching the meaning of the term—its uses in Scripture, in the fathers, and in the schools—the forensic nature of the act—the two-fold justification of the later Romanists—the place of faith in justifying—imputation—the necessity of good works—and the discrepancy between Paul and James. If the new divinity would learn more and subtler objections than it has framed, and see all its vaunted armoury arrayed in more formidable might than by themselves, with overwhelming refutation of greater arguments than they have mustered, by one who often anticipates the very cavils of the nineteenth century—let them come hither. We do not bind ourselves to Owen's interpretations, distinctions, or definitions; but if the topic has educes anything more athletic and commanding, we crave to see it. What is remarkable, two centuries have not made this argument obsolete. So far as it oppugns Baronius, Vasquez, and Hosius, it is the very feud which is between us and our Wisemans, Kenricks, and Hugheses. In these parts, and in all that concerns the Arminians, it is our debate with the corrupt portion of New England. If the anti-socinian passages have lost some of their freshness and pertinency, it is because the latest

form of Unitarian unbelief has reached an aphelion far more wide of truth than the tenets of Socinus.

The remaining article in this fifth volume is the "Gospel Grounds and Evidences of the Faith of God's Elect," and, as a posthumous work, was given to the world in 1695, by Dr. Chauncey, pastor of the Bury Street congregation, in the service of which Dr. Owen died twelve years before, and of which Dr. Watts became pastor in 1687. It is altogether on the marks of true faith, and is a help to self-examination, but with that mixture of didactic statement with description of spiritual states, which appears in all Owen's experimental theology. We may observe that he repudiates a tenet which has been dear to great numbers in Scotland, and some in America, to wit, that faith is an especial assurance of a man's own justification. "*That*," he wisely observes, "it will produce, but not until another step or two in its progress be over."

Two volumes, the eighth and ninth of the complete series, but the fourth and fifth in the order of appearing, are filled with sermons; being the most full and accurate collection which has ever been published. One volume contains all that came from the press in the author's lifetime. Among these is one which Mr. Goold has reclaimed from the "Morning Exercises against Popery, at Southwark;" it appears now for the first time as a part of Owen's works. The sermon on "Human Power Defeated," is for reasons given assigned to the posthumous class. So many of these are what some denominate occasional discourses, that we owe much to the editor's research, for the historical statements which show their pertinency to the time and audience. Owen was more honoured as a preacher by contemporaries than by later generations; but a preacher can be judged only by those who hear him. Both friends and foes attested his power. His preaching was followed by saving effects. He was frequently called to officiate before the Parliament, and usually received their thanks, at a time when this tribute was sometimes bluntly denied. These discourses were often prepared in a very short time, amidst many public cares, so that, to use his own words, they were sometimes "like Jonah's gourd, the offspring of a night." After some judicious remarks on their excellencies, the editor concludes, "that their

chief blemish—if it be a blemish—is the tendency of the author, in the fertility of his resources, to compress within the limits of one sermon what, to minds less affluent, would have furnished materials for several sermons.”

To be more particular, two of these sermons, entitled “Ebenezer,” commemorate the deliverance of Essex County and Committee, in 1648. When Colchester, after a severe siege, yielded to the parliamentary army under Lord Fairfax, Owen was a pastor at the neighbouring town of Coggeshall. The sermons relate to this event, and the similar successes at Rumford. They have been regarded as too warlike in their tone; but when we consider them as delivered to victorious soldiers, we are rather drawn to the evidence they afford of a deep and pervading religious interest in the minds of the commonwealth-men. We can scarcely figure to ourselves a popular preacher using such language as this to a military audience in our day. They are full of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, are textual, doctrinal, evangelical, and spiritual. “Consider,” says the preacher, in peroration, “if there be so much sweetness in a temporal deliverance, Oh! what excellency is there in that eternal redemption which we have in the blood of Jesus! If we rejoice for being delivered from them who could have killed the body, what unspeakable rejoicing is there in that mercy whereby we are freed from the wrath to come! Let this possess your thoughts, let this fill your souls, let this be your haven from all future storms. And here strike I sail, in this to abide with you and all the saints of God for ever.”

There is a discourse on “Righteous Zeal encouraged by Divine Protection,” with an addendum on Toleration. It was preached before the Commons, January 31, 1648, a fast day, on account of the execution of Charles the day before. Owen’s consenting to appear on such an occasion, is regarded by Dr. McCrie as “the greatest blot on his public life.” History says of the sermon, that “it was so modest and inoffensive, that his friends could make no just exception, nor his enemies take an advantage of his words another day.” Nor was it reckoned against him, after the Restoration, until 1683, when, a few weeks before his death, parts of the sermon were publicly burned at Oxford. In 1710, by an order of the

House of Lords, the Oxford decree was in its turn burned by the common hangman. Mr. Orme vindicates the Independents, as a body, from any imputation founded on Owen's appearance at this time. We need scarcely add that the Presbyterians never required such a vindication; for it is well known that the Scottish Covenanters immediately on hearing of the decapitation hastened to proclaim his son king, under the title of Charles II.

The Treatise "of Toleration" comes strangely in, after this sermon. It is calm and noble. In our day and country where the word *toleration* is lost from the vocabulary, in any such sense as this, and in our Church which has amended the Confession of Faith on this head, we might spare some of Owen's ponderous arguments; but they have abiding value in the history of religious liberty.

In a sermon on Rom. iv. 20, preached in 1650, after Owen had been in Ireland, there are some expressions which have peculiar interest at this hour. He is exhorting the Parliament to engage in missionary work, and after allusion to the massacre of forty thousand Protestants in 1641, thus proceeds: "God's work, whereunto you are engaged, is the propagating of the kingdom of Christ, and the setting up the standard of the gospel. How is it that Jesus Christ is in Ireland only as a lion staining all his garments with the blood of his enemies; and none to hold him out as a Lamb sprinkled with his own blood to his friends? Is it the sovereignty and interest of England that is alone to be there transacted? For my part, I see no further into the mystery of these things but that I could heartily rejoice, that innocent blood being expiated, *the Irish might enjoy Ireland, so long as the moon endureth, so that Jesus Christ might possess the Irish.* But God having suffered those sworn vassals of the Man of Sin to break out into such ways of villany as render them obnoxious unto vengeance, upon such rules of government among men as he hath appointed; is there, therefore, nothing to be done but to give a cup of blood into their hands? Doubtless the way whereby God will bring the followers of the beast to condign destruction for all their enmity to the Lord Jesus, will be by suffering them to run into such practices against men as shall righteously expose them to ven-

geance, according to acknowledged principles among the sons of men. But is this all? hath he no further aim? Is not all this to make way for the Lord Jesus to take possession of his long since promised inheritance? And shall we stop at the first part? Is this to deal fairly with the Lord Jesus?—call him out to the battle, and then keep away his crown? God hath been faithful in doing great things for you; be faithful in this one, *do your utmost for the preaching of the gospel in Ireland.*”

Two sermons are on the “Branch of the Lord the Beauty of Zion;” and one of them was preached at Edinburgh, after Cromwell’s severe dealings with the Presbyterian forces at Dunbar. Cromwell, on taking possession of the Scotch capital, had some sharp correspondence with the Presbyterian clergy. In reply to one of his lectures which he read them, and in allusion to his famous preaching colonels and prophesying privates, they sent from the castle their utterance of “regret that men of mere civil place and employment should usurp the calling and employment of the ministry, particularly in Scotland, contrary to the government and discipline therein established—to the maintenance whereof (say they to the victorious Independent) you are bound by the Solemn League and Covenant.” Cromwell, in his rejoinder, says, “The Lord pity you!” He is sarcastic upon the Presbyterians for their inconsistency in “crying down malignants,* and yet setting up the head of them, Charles Stuart.” The sermons are dedicated to the man in power, but without commendatory phrases, and with a quasi apology for being found among men-at-arms. Another sermon commemorates what Cromwell styled “the crowning mercy” of “Worcester fight,” which decided his control of all England; and still another is on the death of Ireton. But all these yield in regard to the greatness of the occasion, to one which follows the great Protector’s death. This also was delivered before Parliament, and it betrays, as Mr. Goold remarks, a spirit of anxiety as to the future developments of Providence. It may be observed of all these discourses, that though pronounced before excited political bodies, in troublous times, they are

* We thought we had reached an end of marvelling at Webster’s American Dictionary, when we came upon the following definition, (Springfield edition, 1843, p. 689, “MALIGNANT, 2. A name of reproach for a Puritan.”—[Obs.]

made up chiefly of the great and permanent truths of theology, and contain pungent spiritual counsels to men in power. An extract, otherwise suggestive, will serve as a specimen. "Labour personally (says he to the legislators) every one of you, to get Christ in your own hearts. I am very far from thinking that a man may not be lawfully called to magistracy, if he be not a believer; or that being called, he should be impeded in the execution of his trust and place because he is not so. I shall not suspend my obedience while I inquire into my governor's conversion; but yet, this I say, considering that I cannot much value any good, but that which comes by the way of promise, I confess I can have no great expectation from them whom God loves not, delights not in. If any be otherwise minded, I shall not contend with him; but for this I will contend with all the world, that it is your duty to labour to assure Christ in your own hearts, even that you may be the better fitted for the work of God in the world." These are sayings which might sound oddly in the ears of modern legislatures.

There are sermons of a different character in this volume, such as must have given more scope to the author's mind, in its habitual and favourite exercise of grappling with the great doctrines of reformed theology and transmuting them into experience. Of this class are the discourses on Reproof, on the Authority of the Scripture, and on the Romish Chamber of Imagery. They were delivered at Pinner's Hall, by Presbyterian and Independent ministers, who were glad to unite in this labour of love as soon as the penal laws began to be suspended. We have often wished that some wealthy men in our cities would set up something like the week-day lectureships of London, a number of which still exist, and from which so many volumes of sound theology have proceeded. The first lecturers were Dr. Bates, Dr. Manton, Dr. Owen, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Jenkyn. Out of a controversy about Antinomianism grew the lectures at Salter's Hall. The editor's prefatory note informs us that these lectures at Pinner's Hall were only the resumption of a series which had been interrupted by the Restoration. During the wars of the Commonwealth, the pious Londoners used to meet in crowds at seven in the morning, every day, using different churches in rotation. It was a

concert of prayer for friends in the army. When the war declined, this became a casuistical lecture. The discourses were printed in numerous volumes, some of which are still seen on book-stalls and in old collections, under the several titles of "The Morning Exercise Methodized," 1660, 1661, 1674, 1683, and 1690; and "The Morning Exercise against Popery," 1675. Of earlier date are "The Morning Exercise at Giles-in-the-Fields," 1655, and "The Word of Faith, at Martin's-in-the-Fields," 1655.

Among the sermons of this volume the reader will find Owen's "Country Essay for the Practice of Church Government there." In the preface he indulges in this sharp sally. "Those names which men are known by when they are oppressed, they commonly use against others whom they seek to oppress. I would, therefore, that all horrid appellations, as increasers of strife, kindlers of wrath, enemies of charity, food for animosity, were for ever banished from amongst us. Let a spade be called a spade, so we take heed Christ be not called Beelzebub. I know my profession to the greatest part of the world is sectarism, as Christianity; amongst those who profess the name of Christ, to the greatest number [Papists] I am a sectary, because a Protestant; amongst Protestants, at least the one-half [Lutherans] account all men of my persuasion Calvinistical, sacramentarian sectaries; amongst these, again, to some [Episcopalians] I have been a puritanical sectary, an Arian heretic, because anti-prelatical; yea, and amongst these last not a few [Independents] account me a sectary, because I plead for Presbyterial government in churches; and to all these am I thus esteemed, as I am fully convinced, causelessly and erroneously." His "Essay" or programme of a church-organization comprehends the following provisions. Ecclesiastical boundaries are to be marked, not by the civil power "with the precincts of high constables," but by ministers and other Christians. Ministers actually in office are to remain. Elders, chosen "annually or otherwise," are to join in rule and admonition. The ministers are to act "jointly, and as in a classical combination, and putting forth all authority that such classes are entrusted with." It is allowable, that other officers chosen by the brethren be added to these. The latter

part of the discourse discusses the subject of Toleration. This is not the place for examining the question of Owen's theory of church government. Mr. Thomson, in his *Memoir*, is studiously moderate on this point. We may with the utmost safety go his length, if no further, and conclude that Owen modified his independent tenets as he grew older, admitted that a government including lay elders might not be useless, admitted a certain connection of particular churches in regard to powers, and admitted the propriety of synodal action in cases of flagrant error or defection. That Owen was a zealous maintainer of an eldership which did not preach, or what has been called a congregational Presbytery, must be known to all our instructed readers.

The Posthumous Sermons fill the remaining volume, and fall into two classes; those which were prepared for the press by the author, and those which were reported from notes taken in hearing. Or, dividing them by time, as our editor does, we have those published at different years, severally, to wit, 1690, 1721, 1756, and 1760. The discourses on the Strength of Faith are in the best strain of his peculiar blending of dogma with experience, and contain some keen thrusts in a style almost satiric at the Arminianizing church-divines of the day, who harped on the charge of solifidianism, which Owen shows lay as justly against their own articles. In preaching on the Nature and Beauty of Gospel Worship, he touched a favourite theme, more fully treated in his "Spiritual Mindedness." Here we have the philosophy of Puritanism, as opposed to the ritualism of the Laudians, which lives again in the Puseyism of our own age. This required masterly and delicate handling, in a time when Familism, early Quakerism, and other enthusiastic schemes, were drawing mightily towards that disuse of external, and as they pretended, "carnal ordinances," an error charged on dissent and perhaps exemplified by such isolated antiprelatists as Milton in old age.

Casuistical Theology was deeply considered in a time when thousands were under conviction of sin, in a travailing nation, pervaded by intense anxieties respecting personal salvation, and urging their way by various paths, true and false, towards inward peace. The church-meetings of exercised brethren

were much taken up with cases of conscience, such as always arise under discriminating utterance of the truth, but which in that period of earnestness were more formally brought to the test of Scripture and argument. We dare not affirm that this morbid anatomy of the soul was not sometimes carried to an extreme, but we are sure the inward workings of the heart, and the actings of the new creature, under the Spirit of God, and against the temptations of the adversary, were never laid bare with a more skilful hand than that of Owen. Mr. Goold has judiciously indicated the differences between this legitimate method, and that "art of quibbling with God," which had the same name among the Jesuits, and received its *coup de grace* from the pen of Pascal. He refers us also to the casuistical literature of Protestantism, as found in Mayer, Bishops Sanderson and Taylor, Dickson, Pike and Hayward, and the Morning Exercises. Fourteen cases of conscience are here treated in as many short discourses at church-meetings. Every page reveals something of both preacher and hearers; a spiritual physician, learned, skilful, daring, and compassionate, and a community widely agitated with inquiries such as in our times would scarcely collect a congregation, especially on a working-day. Some of the questions answered are these: What conviction of a state of sin, and of the guilt of sin, is necessary to cause a soul to look after Christ? What are the evidences that we have received Christ? How are we to recover from decays? May we pray to Christ, as Mediator? Is prevalent sin consistent with a state of grace? These are topics for all time, and are here discussed with the author's known pungency and scriptural wisdom.

Owen often, if not generally, preached extempore; and the only approach we can make to a knowledge of his manner in this kind must be derived from the short-hand reporter. Though the world, we may fairly presume, never possessed a system of philosophical stenography until the phonographic invention of Pitman, it has had short-hand-writers from a very early age. The *notarii* of the Romans took down the substance of all great orations. They are mentioned by Pliny and Martial, and some manuscripts contain specimens of the symbols used in this tachygraphy, as it was called; these may

be examined in any Tauchnitz edition of Cicero. Almost all the sermons of Augustine were taken from his lips in this manner; not to speak of similar reports of certain Greek fathers. We owe thirty-eight discourses of Owen to the ready pen of a loving hearer, Sir John Hartopp. Of this good man, Dr. Watts says, in his imaginative and original sermon on the 'Happiness of separate Spirits;' "When I name Sir John Hartopp, all that know him will agree, that I name a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian." He was often in parliament, and was a warm friend of Dr. Owen. As to the sermons, "he wrote them in short-hand from the Doctor's own mouth, and then took the pains to transcribe them into long-hand, as thinking them worthy of being transmitted down to posterity." The like affectionate care has preserved to us some of the most useful labours of Robert Hall. In regard to matter, these reported sermons of Owen remind us constantly of his other works; though, being parts of ordinary parochial teaching, they are often on plain subjects, the daily nutriment of God's people. But as to style and manner, they have some striking peculiarities, even after due allowance has been made for lacunæ in the report. The transitions are rapid; the illustrations are more brightly figured; the whole air is quick and familiar; and instead of the circumvolved and lumbering amplifications which rolled from the great Doctor's copious quill, we have sentences almost as brisk and curt as those of his more mercurial nonconformist brethren. A comparison of Owen's written and oral homiletic style is worthy of being recommended to young preachers. Of these sermons twenty-five constitute a series which has been printed again and again, under the title of 'Sacramental Discourses.' An edition of them appeared in 1844, with a preface by Dr. Alexander of Edinburgh, a learned and able divine, who speaks of the collection "as, upon the whole, one of the most useful and instructive companions to the Lord's table with which the literature of the country can supply them."

Thus we have gone over the contents of these five volumes with the confident expectation that even this meager outline will induce some to procure the entire work. But we must not deny ourselves the liberty of adding some remarks on the cha-

rafter and merits of this great theologian. Among his coëvals he was by common consent ranked as foremost in the array of Calvinistic Nonconformists. His services to the cause of religion and liberty were not confined to the products of his study; he was great in the pulpit, in the guidance of troubled consciences, in the polity of education, and in what his own age denominated "affairs." Hence he became the target for many a flight of arrows from errorists, high-churchmen and malignants, carrying the venom of South's wit and the barbed doggerel of Butler's iambics. He was so far an Independent, as to suffer in the estimation of such Presbyterians as distrusted Cromwell and could not forget the field of Dunbar. Yet his ponderous wisdom and shining piety overbore all temporary dislike, and secured him a name which none have more tenderly cherished than our ecclesiastical progenitors. His immense erudition joined to an exhaustive, crushing logic, and a fervour as high as that of the mystics, but purer and more scriptural, caused his writings to be the almost necessary arsenal of succeeding polemics. His philology, his school-divinity, his classic stores, his thorough reading in all heresies, and his unanswerable reasonings, were tenfold more honourable, because they resulted not in novel hypotheses, but in fortifying the catholic tenets of the Reformed faith. In this respect he was a strong contrast to Richard Baxter, who had equal knowledge of recondite literature, equal ardour, equal sincerity, and vastly greater command of eloquent diction, in "English pure and undefiled;" but who was for ever goaded by the œstrum of inventive genius, misled by the lights of his restless imagination, puzzled by distinctions akin to those of Aquinas and Scotus, whom he so often quotes, and wasted in speculations intended to better but really marring the symmetrical reformation edifice. Hence it is the hortatory works of one, and the theological treatises of the other, which are respectively their glory. As unlike was Owen to John Howe, but for other reasons. We do not remember any expatiating ascents of Owen, sustained through such a career of spiritual soaring, as some of Howe's. Owen displays more of the process, the heave and groanings of the engine, the powerful and often tedious exercitation on originals, textual sources, and dogmatic sequence, the repeated downfalls of the

tilt-hammer on heretical sophisms, and the obstructed but triumphant passage from inward strength to palpable effects. Howe seldom spends long time on the Hebrew and Greek text, meddles little with the genesis and growth of schools and opinions, hardly ever looks aside at opponents, never disturbs his gradual rise to unearthly elevation by the technicalities of the books, but platonizes in a Christian sense, floats away on his own happy wing, consistently with common faith, but in a language all his own, free from the trick of contemporary quaintness and puritanic mannerism, yet swelling into peculiar eloquence for those who can accompany him through the occasional heaviness of his preliminary movements. It is remarkable how few sentences can be detached from Howe's folios, expressive of the critical definitions of strict Calvinism, which, on the whole, he nevertheless admitted; while in Owen such may be found *ad aperturam libri*. With Manton, Charnock, Bates and Flavel, it would be a violence to compare John Owen; great in a certain way they cannot aspire to be named as his compeers.

We do not rank Owen among metaphysical divines. By saying this, we are far from denying to him a perspicacity equal to any, exercised by long converse with the intricacies of scholastic ontology and psychology. In places innumerable, he evinces his power of sustaining divine truth by showing its correspondence with the nature of spiritual things and the record of consciousness. At the same time it is certain, that his method of inquiry and proof is exegetical and dogmatical, rather than philosophical. Our meaning may be most briefly indicated by stating that in the respect intended he is unlike Edwards and the New England theologians. In the same way he also differs from earlier writers, such as Twisse. A profound reverence for the inspired Scriptures, as the material of all theological science, compelled him into the lines of laborious interpreters; so that even where the titles under which he ranges his thoughts are those of the old *theologia dogmatica*, the process of argument conducts him perpetually to a closeness of exegesis, which was limited only by the apparatus of his day.

As a polemic he was formidable. Such any writer must needs be who has mastered all the libraries of error, and nerved

himself by all the labours of the dialectic palæstra, besides possessing invention, clear understanding, manly judgment, and immovable love of truth. It was not however by smart fetches, nimble fence, or the suddenness of single dashes, that he achieved his victories. The mode of his day took time for campaigns; and this was favourable to Owen, who never left an unreduced fortress in his rear, and loved to pursue his adversary in every movement, and drive him from every cover. In so doing he is often tedious, but he is never weak and never sophistical; and there is a glow of interest, when after a lengthened preparation, he concentrates his columns, and overwhelms a Socinian or Popish enemy by the irresistible summation of his argument. Yet it is nowise surprising, that readers of a hasty or fastidious turn should regard many of his dissertations as unreasonably drawn out.

The wonder is, that a writer of such intellectual force and such store of learning, should have displayed the majesty of his faculties in treatises on the inward experience of the renewed soul. This must be admitted as the fact. Leaving out of view sermons, and passages of great unction, interspersed throughout his doctrinal works, we need only remind any reader of the books on Communion, on Temptation, on Indwelling Sin, on the Mortification of Sin, and above all on Spiritual Mindedness. In these he shows a heart exercised with long and sore trials, accustomed to self-inspection, with reference to the highest spiritual standard, and sensitive as to the slightest harm threatening the work of the Spirit. The Antinomian tendencies of the day led him to use the probe with an unflinching hand, and to apply the tests of regeneration with a severity which is sometimes appalling. His lofty idea of a true spiritual worship, under the New Testament, as distinguished from all fancies, frames, imaginary elevations, cceremonious offices, and pompous service, appears and re-appears in every stage of his protracted authorship. On the other hand, the joy of religion, as converse most assured and intimate, with the Mediator, God manifest in the flesh, beams with a holy radiance over all the numerous works which treat of Christ. He would have been out of his element in such a directory for details of Christian practice as fills several volumes of Baxter's works, and his

talent lay as little in convictive application of the law, such as we find in the famous Call to the Unconverted, or Alleine's Alarm; but when he undertook to carry his clew through the mazes of an experienced heart, he did the work of guidance so as to be without a rival. This it is which has endeared his writings to the most spiritual of the evangelical churches, even among the unlettered; while the masculine theology which underlies this stratum of experience like a mass of granite, has commended the same treatises to minds otherwise prone to turn away from experimental religion.

The style of Owen—has been sufficiently stigmatized, till there is scarcely a dainty polisher of smooth periods who has not learnt to gird at it. Notwithstanding some undeniable awkwardnesses, it has qualities of characteristic greatness. Its very unwieldiness often holds the attention and leaves impressions such as the author purposed. Owen's sentences abhor melodious rhythm, and twist themselves into cacophony, disappointing the ear of all cadence; as if one with a fine voice should try to sing out of tune. The natural directness, unstudied tenderness, and manly grace of Baxter's incomparable English is certainly wanting; yet Owen is English too, and often most so where he is most huge and exorbitant in his homely circumlocutions. No one can plead in his behalf that he was ruined by classical reading, for it is agreed that his Latin is worse than his vernacular; see the *Theologoumena passim*. All cunning balance of clauses was far from his thoughts. Labouring with anxieties of another sort, he broke forth in words which threw themselves into unusual but strong array, making the style a genuine effluence of the man. Similitudes and metaphors are not numerous, and when he goes into his garden, all is welcome that tells his meaning, be it weed or flower; but we could give a *hortus siccus* of such illustrations, equal to any we ever read for rugged force and power over the imagination. He revelled much more in those formulas, even down to illative particles, which denote the articulations of logic, and loved to play with these technical phrases, as a swordsman preludes his assault by motions proper to his art of defence. There are moods in which the student who is capable of an interest in such great wrestling of ratiocination will take

a peculiar delight in these very formalities of the schools. They had not yet invented our way of crushing a heretical opponent with rose-leaves and violets, or turning the dialectic spear into a thyrsus of epigrams. We can never cease to regret that a man so truly admirable as Robert Hall should have allowed himself to disparage our great theologian in words so contemptuous as some which are ascribed to him. The well known remark about the "continent of mud," recorded by Dr. Gregory, is traditionally said to have been repeated by Hall to the late Dr. John M. Mason, who was an enthusiastic admirer of Owen, and well able to vindicate him. Something similar is found in the Reminiscences of a Mr. Greene, prefixed to the fourth American volume of Hall's works; a memoir which up to the moment of this present writing stands clearly first in our list of puerile biographies. Among a score of vapid or foolish sayings (often deriving their quality doubtless from the conduit) perpetuated in this helpless collection, Hall is made to say of Owen; "I can't think how you can like Dr. Owen. I can't read him with any patience. I never read a page of Dr. Owen, sir, without finding some confusion in his thoughts, either a truism or a contradiction in terms." It was adventurous in Mr. Hall, (supposing him to have ever said it,) so summarily to depose the acknowledged champion of English Calvinism from a place accredited to him by the suffrages of theologians, themselves great, and of various and opposing schools. It was a false judgment, perhaps adopted early, in his Socinian days, left uncorrected by any sufficient perusal of Owen's works, and favoured by the strong repugnance of a delicate tasteful scholar for the austere, antiquated and uncouth style of the mighty but slipshod Non-conformist. How unlike this the recorded opinions of Watts and Doddridge, and (not to confine ourselves to dissent,) of Cecil, who said: "Owen stands at the head of his class of divines. His scholars will be more profound and enlarged, and better furnished, than those of most other writers. His work on the Spirit has been my treasure-house, and one of my very first-rate books." Indeed it would be easy to fill pages with extracts, in the nature of testimonials to the esteem in which Dr. Owen was held first by his contemporaries, and

then by sound and capable theologians of each succeeding generation down to our own day. But he asks no witnesses; his works are before us, to speak for themselves.

David Aug. Ev.

ART. II.—*Early Christianity in the British Isles.*

BRITAIN was first invaded by the Romans, about half a century before the birth of Jesus Christ. The horrible rites of Druidism then prevailed over the Island. With the inhabitants of Britain, and with the appalling rites of this superstition, the Roman people were made acquainted through the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar. Under the Emperor Claudius, who invaded the Island in person, about A. D. 43, the country was for the most part subjugated to the invincible arms of the Romans; and it continued in their possession down to the middle of the fifth century. It is a fact sufficiently ascertained by history, that the Roman conquests led to the extermination of Druidism, and thus, in the providence of God, paved the way for the introduction of Christianity.

Of the first introduction of Christianity into Great Britain we have no authentic information. The legendary records of the monkish historians of the middle ages are unworthy of credit. But while we do not acknowledge the authority of tradition, we may at least listen to its voice, and collect the substance of what it has most unvaryingly handed down to us. Tradition often contains the outlines of historical truth, and while rejecting its amplifications and details, we may in some instances allow the main circumstances to be true.

In the traditionary annals of the British Isles, we find the name of the apostle Paul mentioned as the first who planted the gospel among the Britons. This is one of the most uncertain and vague of the many traditions on this subject. But Bishop Stillingfleet, Adam Clarke, and others, have supposed that this account is corroborated by the words of Clement of