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ARTICLE I.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD AS RELATED TO THE WORK OF REDEMPTION.

There are two great chains connecting man in his destiny with eternity and with God. One is the chain of God's providence; the other is the chain of Christ's redemption. It might at first appear difficult to decide which of these, considered in itself and apart from its relations to the other, affords matter of more profound and interesting inquiry.

How wonderful, for instance, is the chain of divine providence, as, taking its origin in the depth of the eternal purposes of God, and interweaving itself with all the details of human history, it forges its successive links in the midst of the rise and fall of empires, the growth and decay of civilisations, and the revolutions and dismemberments of states, presenting to us the finger of God in every event of history, from the falling of a sparrow to the overthrow of a kingdom or the extinction of a world.

How wonderful, on the other hand, is the chain of redemption, which takes its rise in the depth of the same unfathomable eternity, which we may trace backward link by link to the same deep counsels of the same unchanging Jehovah; and

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ARTICLE IV.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

Biography is a department of writing fraught with peculiar interest. In examining public libraries the writer has remarked that the shelves containing personal memoirs are the most frequented, with the single exception of those that hold the novels, or romances, as they are sometimes called. We naturally admire those who have sought true distinction; for there is a difference between the notoriety of a showman and the eminence of a philosopher. The contrast is striking between Dr. Chalmers and any divine who would have made a comic chaplain to Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest. At all periods of the world there have been pretenders; but like discarded fossils, they experienced the degradation for which they were designed. Whilst such are buried in obscurity, we cherish the memory of those who have aimed at noble objects, and we instinctively trace the steps by which they achieved their eminence and accomplished the great purposes of life. Life has been called a pilgrimage, and we are curious to know when and where the pilgrim started, the arid tracts over which he passed, the hills he may have outstripped, and each oasis on which he found a temporary repose. It has been likened to a voyage by periodical writers in the reigns of Queen Anne and George III. We feel anxious to find out what storms assailed the mariner, or whether the waves were level, and whether the green lawns of the sea correspond to the green spots of the desert. In the voyage alluded to, how many statesmen, heroes, and poets have been wrecked.

There is no dispute about the advantage derived from general biography. The question has long since been decided. It is a conquest gained by literature over popular ignorance; and in the use of the victory we are made acquainted with various classes of men, from speculative philosophers to useful mechanicians. What a deprivation would it be to seal such a fountain of instruction, coupled as it has often been, with sparkling inci-

dent. But autobiography is still open to discussion, and we propose to offer a few remarks on the subject, which may go for what they are worth. The writer wishes to be its advocate without impinging on the views of any who may differ in their opinions. The objections, however, are for the most part confined to the Simon-pures, both of the Christian and literary world.

Self-biography is said to be closely allied to self-complacency. It engenders a feeling of personal consequence. The man rates himself at more than he was rated by the world. His virtues will be sent to the front, but his faults ordered to the rear of his book. He will not write with impartiality; but his leanings, like the tower of Pisa, will always be in one direction. it from the writer to advocate anything that ministers to human The man who burns incense to self and disperses its vanity. clouds among his admirers, must expect the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, in a moral if not miraculous sense. apprehend that the objector is needlessly alarmed. We have glanced over a number of autobiographies, and compared the objections with the facts; but our limits will not admit of more than the selection of a few examples. We will take the memoir of himself by Watson, Bishop of Landaff, and what do we read? Why, murmurs about the poor village in Glamorgan to which he was sent, complaints about the salary of four thousand pounds sterling, the mistake of the Premier in giving him such a rusty mitre, and sundry other grievances rather too numerous to be mentioned. If Peter had gone on after that fashion, we doubt whether he would ever have been installed as Pope. The prelate places himself in a most unenviable position, and we regret it, for he had done good service in rebuking the temerity of Tom Paine, the Deist and Jacobin. The impression produced by the whole volume is painful, and leads to the belief that the Bishop on the Tof was acquainted with the externals far more than the internals of the Christianity he defended. Religion is not regarded by him as something stereotyped in the heart. may be thought uncharitable by some, but not so in the presence of revealed truth. We take up the Life of Scott, the prelimi-

naries of which were written by the Commentator. And what do we read but that when professing to have been called to the ministry he committed the sin of Ananias and Sapphira? He tells us that he went into the sacred office destitute of all piety, and to shear instead of saving the flock. Vide the "Force of Truth," passim. The same is true of Chalmers and Legh Rich-These are startling disclosures, and it is almost a question whether the blushes of these excellent men ought to have been made visible to the public. More than forty years have gone by since the writer has seen the Life of Fuller, who preached at Kettering, Northampton, England; but if memory serves him right, the depreciation of self was about the most conspicuous feature in the book. The reader could find no silver lining to the cloud of unworthiness in which the luminary seemed to live. This morbid feeling might have been the result of natural causes, but the fact has been correctly stated. Southey alleges that the author of Pilgrim's Progress has made himself too great a sinner. The Keswick Recluse glosses over and explains away the transgressions which gave to Bunyan the keen convictions he has recorded. It is a pity that Southey ever undertook to portray religious characters. For reasons which might be given, he was not fitted to the task. His portrait of Wesley was a failure, and that of Whitefield a caricature. His "Book of the Church" is written in a bland and elegant style, and he says some fine things about the Smithfield and Oxford martyrs; but he was such a changeling, both in religion and politics, that had he lived to these Pusevite times, he would have cast a shadow over the blaze in which those illustrious confessors were con-The heart knows its own bitterness; and a formalist, as Southey was, he could not judge the moral condition of Bunyan or fathom the depth of his superinduced convictions. a monkish legend at Subiaco, Italy, that St. Benedict was so beset by his sins that he rolled himself among nettles and that the nettles were all metamorphosed into roses. And unless we feel the brambles of sin, we may never wear the flowers of Sharon on our scallops in our pilgrimage through the wilderness. thought Bunyan. But instances need not be multiplied, for

their name is legion. This, however, may be a peculiarity, confined for the most part to Christian biography. Religious men are apt to dwarf themselves just as the people of Japan reduce They can bring down a robust oak to the dimensions of a green-house by stopping the sap of the tree. this so often done by Christian men? Because objects external to themselves are to be magnified. When we reflect on the magnitude of the sun, our planet scarcely rises to the dignity of an asteroid; and humility has always been the best stand-point from which to view the mysteries of revelation. But how is it with that species of autobiography which is purely literary? Do not its writers seek after self-exaltation? It must here be borne in mind that personal memoirs are not usually written with a view to publication during the natural life of their authors. that Hayley was an exception to this rule; but we may kindly excuse him, from the fact that Eastham, his patrimonial seat in Sussex, England, was about to be sold, and of course he was blameless in resorting to any honorable expedient to raise money. These self-records are prepared in view of that honest hour in which we become indifferent to the censure or the applause of The incentives to vanity for the most part lose their The writer would not have advised Horace Walpole to have written his own life, because it would have been made up of gossip which had reached Strawberry Hill; nor Macaulay, for he would have dogmatized, even to inspiring disgust; nor Lamartine, for his vanity was of too ponderous a kind. Self-praise is no praise, and stands in opposition to the Proverbs of Solomon. Nor would we have advised Sam Johnson, for he would have latinized so much that he could not have taken the salient points of his own character. But we wish that Addison had taken pen in hand for the purpose already designated, for it would have been done with an archness characteristic of the man; or Walton, because he told so naturally the lives of others; or Goldsmith, because he was artless as the Vicar of Wakefield; or Sir Walter Scott, because his playful vanity led him to criticise his own works; or Irving, for he called himself nothing but a scribbler. The truth is, that men of letters who review their own

existence have shown a sensitiveness to the errors they may have committed, and an ingenuousness in making them known. But give their lives to others than themselves, and the biographer immediately finds a Chevalier Bayard in his subject. must be no spots in the luminary given into his keeping. must shine at all events, even if the heavens fall that hold the orb. Miss Seward set herself to the task of writing the Memoir of Dr. Darwin; and what is it but a tissue of indiscriminate laudation? The lady supposed that she shone in the exaggerated shining of the provincial doctor. The physician of Litchfield was respectable in his profession, but a free-thinker and deistthe magnus Apollo doubtless of his neighborhood—and he ambitiously aspired in his botanic garden to rival Lucretius as a philosophical poet. Like the Roman, he leaned to atheism; but Lucretius wrote some sublime poetry, whilst that of Darwin resembles a huge bed of glittering sand. Who can stand the pomp of Miss Birney in the memoir of her father, who was a teacher of music, and no doubt an amiable man; but it would have been well to have asked whether he had ever achieved anything worthy of a volume. He took home a straw from the broom of Dr. Johnson when he could find nothing else as a relic. He had occasion to cross the Alps, and from the biography one would infer that he had either borne them on his shoulders or that he had set them to dancing on the point of a cambric needle. There is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous. What man of correct taste can endure the swollen biographical sketches of Gilfillan, or the grandiloquence of Carlyle in magnifying slight incidents into great events, as he does everywhere, whether in his Life of Burns or the Prussian Frederick? Small incidents have been used to create great results; but our eloquence must be reserved for the consequences in which we may admire the infinite wisdom of the great First Cause.

Now let us suppose that a man is preparing to write the life of any individual, whether the subject were a statesman, soldier, divine, litterateur, artisan, or any thing you please in the varied departments of society. What is the first inquiry which the biographer uniformly makes before entering on his allotted task? Has the deceased left any record of himself which can start me in the work? Has he designated the time and place at which he was born? for no one knows the locality where Homer first saw the light; and there is the same uncertainty about Knox, the great Scottish reformer. We cannot settle the time by two years when Napoleon I. appeared at Ajaccio. or when Oliver Goldsmith drew his first breath among the shamrocks of Pallas. If no record has been left, the inquiry may be made, has he left any diary like the one kept by Pepys in London, which included the great fire and the great plague? for biographical materials have been often found in journals, especially when kept in times of popular excitement. Indeed, fictitious ones have been published; but happily it is not difficult to distinguish between truth and fiction. What is the chaff to the wheat? Should this resource fail, there is a call for the letters of the deceased, though some of them may have been confidential, or written by a dash of the pen, and in moments of literary gaiety. The Life of Cowper, by Hayley, is made exclusively in this way. There is but a scanty portion of original composition in the work. The same is true of the Memoir of Hannah More. The letters are by no means devoid of interest; but we ask, by what authority the communications of the Barley Wood Lady were excluded from the volumes, which were addressed to Dissenters? Strange that letters to Walpole the deist could pass muster, and those to the Rev. Wm. Jay are set The calumniator of the unfortunate Chatterton is preferred to a man who had rough-hewed his way through difficulties into the polished circles of Bath. Even some of the Scottish and English nobility, who flocked to that place of fashionable resort, went home healed of their moral, if not of their natural infirmities. Under his ministrations they caught their first view of the river of life, and the bloom of that tree, the leaves of which are for the healing of sensual individuals, as well as of blinded nations. And how did he effect such benign . results, except by convincing the button-hole gentry that they were all noughts, unless the one Mediator would place himself at the head of the row, for he was King of kings, and Lord of lords?

We regret that any of the letters of Burns were ever published. He was not good at prose composition. The letters of Thomson were published; his songs are very superior to those of the poet. The taste of Burns was often coarse, and his letters betray an ambition to shine. No man should aspire to be grand, unless he be content to reach the sublime through the medium of simplicity. The best prose sentence that ever emanated from the peasant bard, is the following: "The muse of Coila found me at the plough, and threw over me her inspiring mantle." We equally regret that Moore should have made such lavish use of Byron's letters, for some of them are remarkable for a vulgar profanity; and even profane men have generally shunned this sin in their private correspondence. We will venture to say, that all the eyes of Argus would have failed to detect the slightest irreverence in the letters of Sir Robert Boyle; but Byron was a different sort of personage. His intellect was brilliant, but his moral character was so detestable that we supposed it incapable of being calumniated. But strange to say, even he has not escaped an article which appeared in the pantheistic Atlantic. We imagine it must have crept into that work when its editors were asleep. These remarks naturally lead to the following statement: If in a hundred biographies the private records of men have been used to help out the writers, why may not any individual prepare his own memoir? It is a privilege guaranteed to the plainest yeoman, if any thing has occurred to him worth the telling; and if our life has been a Persian tale, no one can possibly relate it so well as the one by whom it has been enjoyed. A man, so to speak, can pursue himself into every lane, and round every angle, and through all the windings of his pilgrim-He can mark his own deviations from the right line, for they are engraven on his memory, and defy all erasure. His sins he need not confess, for we hold that God alone is Lord of the conscience. He knows better than any one else the objects that he loved, the pursuits which gave him pleasure, the temptations by which he was assailed, the disappointments to which he was subjected, the breaking away of clouds, and the brightening prospects by which he was cheered. The German autobiographers are remarkable for the minuteness of the details into which they enter. If one of them happen to be born near a mountain, knoll, milla, copse or strip of meadow land-the writer never fails to attempt the descriptive. Not a few of them have risen from the obscurest poverty; but they are not averse to confessing the fact. This is true of Stilling, a Westphalian, who rose from the humblest kind of life to be Aulic Counsellor to the Grand Duke of Baden; and perhaps Baden never saw in any of its circles so profound a believer in a special providence. This cannot be said of Herder, Gothe, Schiller, Körner, Wieland, cum multis aliis. So far as literature was concerned. these Germans seem to have lived in a green-house; but in all that concerned their immortal interests they lived on an Alpine avalanche. Their libraries were but shelves of polar snow. There is quite a surprising sentence in one of the letters of Schiller to Körner. He says "the home of Gothe is a Gehenna." We infer from this letter, that the Wiemar dramatist was living in violation of all laws both human and divine.

Juvenile days are apt to fill some space in every species of biography. The boy is generally supposed to foreshadow the man. Both Pope and Wordsworth were of this opinion, and the opinion has been confirmed in thousands of instances. Youth is the Arabia Felix of life. It occurs before we begin to clamber over rocks, or to feel the loneliness of age. Old age, at least without piety, must be dreary. It was like Arabia Deserta to Humboldt the atheist, though he was not without a free access to the palace of Sans Souci. We quote his own words: "There is nothing beyond the present. This life is our little all." He died with no paradise in view. Its bosky bournes and groves of long repose were not even mentioned when the heartless philosopher was dying. It is difficult to see how any outsider to the man himself can depict the days of youth, when the boy ranged abroad without restriction-rearing castles in the air, and creating Edens never to be fully realised, for anticipation is seldom fulfilled by possession. Such is the experience of youth before we mingle in the sympathies, and encounter the loss of uphill life. Feuds may arise in more mature life, love grow

cold, friends may become estranged, disappointments may take place, bereavements may crush us down; and though existence be still sweet, the golden coat which was wrapt round the sweetness has been stripped off by painful reality. Nor are men of eminence exempt from severe trials. How did Pericles, Burke, and Beattie, mourn over the coffins of their sons; and Cuvier, Lowth, Fillmore, and Webster, over the shrouds of their daughters, and perhaps mental improvement only added to the keenness of their sorrows? Autobiographers are apt to dwell on the juvenile period of their existence with fondness. This is a striking feature in the memoirs of Marmontel, and the narrative is highly entertaining. Who can be at a loss for materials? for it is the period at which education is begun, and every man, whatever the position may be to which he has been been elevated, loves to recall his school days. Bacon, when High Chancellor of England, if he had tried, could not have forgotten his hornbook; and it is certain that Goldsmith did not lose the recollection of his Pallas preceptor, or Shenstone of his Shrewsbury precep-It may seem puerile to talk of the satchel, the bell, the holiday, the tussle; but they leave reminiscences which cannot be effaced. Chateaubriand left a work evidently intended to be posthumous. The vicissitudes through which he passed were so various that no biographer could have followed him without great perplexity. We doubt not the authenticity and genuineness of all the facts he has stated from his boyish days spent in one of the castles of Brittany to the close of his long and chequered life. He was somewhat imaginative, but at times very forcible as a writer; and his denunciations of the murder of the French duke, seized at midnight on the neutral territory of Baden, are thrilling, and even terrible. Alas! in our late civil war, such seizures were common; but the captured were not They were something better, however, for they were free citizens of the United States. Chateaubriand, when in this country at the close of the last century, predicted the disintegration of these States; but we shall not enter into any speculations on our future destiny. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

In connexion with this branch of our subject, we remark that some eminent men, in passing through the process of their education, have encountered difficulties with the several colleges to which they were sent. Tasso, Milton, Locke, Penn, Gibbon, and Shelley, are certainly found in this category. Shelley probably paraded his irreligion throughout his college, for he afterwards wrote himself atheist on the brow of mountains which God weighed in scales, as if they had been but walnuts in his sight. Gibbon embracing Papistry, and Penn Quakerism, might have produced the eddies to which they were exposed in the quiet stream of academic life. Locke might have expressed political opinions at variance with those of his professors; but we would give a fair hearing to all the supposed culprits. Their own pens could have given the best narration of all the facts; and this is one advantage of autobiography, that men can write in their own defence, and disperse every cloud of suspicion. Who can blame Marshal Grouchy for vindicating himself against the aspersions of Napoleon, touching the battle of Waterloo? This he has done triumphantly. It's all gammon about Blücher's turning the fate of the day. Napoleon was defeated horse, foot, and dragoons, before Blücher appeared, notwithstanding Headley, Abbot, et id omne genus. There is nothing more pleasing in biography than the domestication of distinguished men in families, though they may be remote from cities. Dr. Johnson felt the charm of this in writing the life of Dr. Watts, who found a home for six and thirty years at the seat of Sir Thomas Abney, about two miles from London-an extraordinary instance of refinedand elegant hospitality. Perhaps the window of the divine may have overlooked the lawn on which light and shade so often alternated. The grasses of England are of a greener hue than those of our country; and among rural embellishments, the Christian poet probably hummed his spiritual song on walks bordered by the violets of spring, or by the roses of June. He made piety. rather than ambitious poetry, to take the lead in his hymns; and, like the rod of Aaron, that piety swallowed up inferior things; whilst it bloomed in the sweet blossoms peculiar to the hill of But this was not the only instance of domestication.

We find Thomson at Hagley; Swift at Moorpark; Gibbon at the Sussex seat of Lord Sheffield; Coleridge at Highgate; Locke at Oates; and Sir William Jones at Wimbledon, the residence of Earl Spencer. Swift and Gibbon are no favorites of ours; but Locke and Sir William are not without many admirers. We wish that each of them had given an autobiography presenting a picture of their indoor life during the periods of their seclusion. We should like to know more of Sir Francis Masham, and of his lady, who was the daughter of Cudworth; and a little more about High Laver, the hamlet in Essex, near which stood the residence that sheltered the great and good metaphysician when sick and dying. We should like to know whether Prior of Down Hall ever rode over from Harlow to see Locke. We suppose not, for his morals were not quite so good as those of the philosopher. It is absurd to say that a retired man can find nothing about which to scribble. Why, Wordsworth wrote up all the lake country, because his cottage was on a hill, and he could see Grassmere, Winder, and Derwent, at a glance. What said Lady Austen to Cowper: "Write about any thing. Write about this sofa." There was once a people who could not make bricks without straw. But there is an abundance of straw in the country, and therefore we say, "Go to, ye are idle, ye are idle, and we hope you may build Pithom and Rameses as monuments of industry." Sir William Jones was a man of great diligence—but this article must not be protracted. We wish, however, that he had written his own memoirs.

It is to be hoped that autobiography may open still wider fields for the entertainment of readers than it has yet disclosed. If executed in a modest way, no one ought to object. Locke wrote his own epitaph, for fear, no doubt, that some one might try to make him a great man. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Philadelphia, did the same thing, and probably for the same reason. If biography be properly written, it might to some extent abate the burning thirst which now prevails for novels like those by Dickens, Thackeray, and Collins. We should like to know what intellectual delta will ever be fertilised by the overflow of our railroad literature. The Nilometer shows twenty-eight Paris feet,

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and a famine will be the consequence. They tell us that Lord Lytton is very low spirited, because he has written so many The inundation must be reduced, before Egypt, or even the boastful United States, can become an intellectual granary. In biography we want to know how the minds of its subjects were nursed and developed. This is the most important part of that kind of composition. The admirers of Daniel Webster tell us that he first read the Constitution of the United States printed on a pocket handkerchief. Very well. His mind may have been started in that way, as the jealousy of Othello was nursed in the same way. We wish that John C. Calhoun had left a memoir of himself, for he could have told us what it was that set his wonderful mind on the track of statesmanship. The Scotch have evinced quite a talent for biography. Knox and his coadjutors George Buchanan and the Melvilles are deeply interesting; and so are those of John Erskine, Beattie, Campbell, and Ladies Yester, Glenorchy, Colquhoun, and the Duchess of Gordon. We can understand perfectly well the sources from which the mind of each one of these individuals Letters and records of their own are often used; and, after all, every person is the most capable judge of his own feelings, experience, motives, attainments, and aims. his autobiography tells us that he was born with a passion for horses; and he must have been-for he drove fourteen of these animals all the way from England to Piedmont; Gifford, the critic, that he was so poor that he used a part of his leather for a slate, and his awl for a pencil wherewith to work out his algebra. Wilson the ornithologist tells us that he was very hungry on the Delaware, and that he killed a bird, the plumage of which so enchanted him that he determined to explore all our American forests. Addison, according to Miss Aiken, was so alarmed by a threat of his teacher that he spent a night in the hollow of an old tree. Would that the urchin had given us from his own pen his ruminations through that eventful night. We regard the biographical work of Dr. Sprague as evincing great research, and as an honor to the American Church; but cannot any one see at a glance that the work is greatly helped by the

the men and their peculiarities. Know thyself; and as every one knows himself better than a stranger, we see no harm in a person writing his own life. But should any body differ with us, he will find the writer perfectly tolerant in all his opinions. We have been favored of late with some fine specimens of biography. Among them are lives of Dr. Raffles of Liverpool, and Hamilton of London, and Dr. Miller of Princeton, and Addison Alexander. But it would have been better perhaps had these distinguished individuals written their own memoirs. We may add to these the biographies of Lady Colquboun, and the late Duchess of Gordon, for these ladies must never be forgotten.

ARTICLE V.

THE NEW CHURCH.

1. Dr. Van Dyke's Pamphlet, reviewing the Correspondence between the Northern and Southern General Assemblies. Brooklyn, 23d June, 1870.

2. Dr. Dabney's Letter to Dr. Van Dyke. Christian Observer.

Louisville, 6th July, 1870.

3. Proceedings of the Presbyterian Assembly in Philadelphia. New-York Observer.

4. The Delegation to the Southern General Assembly. Princeton Review, Vol. XLII., No. 3, Art. VII.

It is proper to observe at the outset, that whatever may be here said concerning the Northern Church, is uttered from a stand-point as really separate as it would be if that Church occupied a different continent. The nature of the differences, therefore, separating our own organisation from theirs, is dissimilar from the nature of the differences existing between the Southern Presbyterian Church and any other sect of Christians; as, for example, there are more points of resemblance betwixt that