

THE

ATONEMENT,

IN ITS

RELATIONS TO LAW AND MORAL GOVERNMENT.

BY

ALBERT BARNES.

11

“There may be beings in the universe whose capacities, and knowledge, and views may be so extensive as that the whole Christian dispensation may to them appear natural, *i. e.* analogous and conformable to God’s dealings with other parts of his creation; as natural as the visible course of things appears to us.”

BUTLER’S ANALOGY, Part I. ch. i.



PHILADELPHIA:

PARRY & M^cMILLAN,

SUCCESSORS TO A. HART, LATE CAREY & HART.

1859.

BT265
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STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON & CO.
PHILADELPHIA.

COLLINS, PRINTER.

TO THE
HON. HIRAM DENIO, LL.D.

A JUDGE OF THE COURT OF APPEALS OF THE STATE OF
NEW YORK.

It is partly from the memory of our early friendship, and partly because I can better express the design of this work in this way than by the usual form of a preface, that I have asked the privilege of dedicating it to you.

We began life together. We were both in a comparatively humble but respectable position, and we have been both directed by an overruling hand in paths which we did not at first contemplate. Both, when we left our homes to seek an education, designed to pursue the study of the law; but in our professional pursuits, and in the general course of our lives, we have been led in different ways. You, by talent, by industry, by integrity, have risen to that position deservedly high which you now occupy as one of the Judges of the highest court of our native State. My thoughts were early turned to a different profession, and my steps have been directed in another course. Both of us have been prospered; and now, when we have reached that period of life in which we cannot but be looking forward to its close, I have a pleasure in referring in this manner to the time when we began life together, and in connecting your name with this book.

It is true that in this work, designed to illustrate the relation of the atonement *to law*, I have travelled somewhat out of my profession, as I have from the usual course of my studies. I know the danger of doing this; and I think it not improbable that you will detect things in this feature of my work which a professional lawyer would have avoided. But I have never ceased to feel an interest in the profession which was the object of my early thought and purpose, nor have I ever ceased to feel that *personally* it would be to me the most attractive of all the callings of life, save that one in which I have spent my days. I have wished to commend the great doctrine of the Christian atonement to a mind accustomed to contemplate the nature and the obligation of law. It is no secret to you that my own mind was early skeptical on the whole subject of religion, and I may say to you now that on no doctrine of the Christian faith have I found that early skepticism give me more embarrassment than on the doctrine of the atonement. This book is the result of my best efforts to meet the difficulties, in this aspect of the subject, which have occurred to me, and which have so much perplexed me.

I have supposed that there were other minds in the same state in which my own has been, and that they would gladly welcome an attempt to solve their difficulties on this great subject. In preparing this work I have had in my imagination such a mind constantly before me, and have endeavoured—with what success others must judge—to answer the questions which I have supposed a mind of that class, and in that state, would be disposed to ask.

You will not regard it, I am sure, as an improper reflection if I use the *plural* form and say that *we* are now approaching the period when our earthly labours must terminate. In the *subject* considered in this book we have a common interest,

and in the great doctrine which I have attempted to illustrate and defend, I trust we have a common belief, as furnishing the ground of our hope of a better life; and though on the nature of law and government I could hope to say nothing which would be worthy of your attention, yet on the method adopted in the plan of redemption of meeting embarrassments which are universally felt in administering justice, and in dispensing pardon, I may, perhaps, have said something not wholly unworthy of your regard. However that may be, the sending forth of this volume to the world—perhaps the last which I shall ever submit to that indulgent public for whose favours I cannot be sufficiently thankful—furnishes me an opportunity of expressing the earnest wish that the evening of your life may be as serene and happy as its mid-day has been prosperous and honoured; and of giving utterance to the hope that, as we began life together, with similar aspirations in regard to this world, and with similar views on the subject of religion, we may end it with the same hope of a future life founded on the atonement made by the Redeemer, and that to us, in a higher state of being, what is now dark even in that work may be made bright as the noon-day.

I am, with the highest respect,

Sincerely and truly yours,

ALBERT BARNES.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 26, 1858.

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THE ATONEMENT

IN ITS

RELATIONS TO LAW AND MORAL GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER I.

PRESUMPTIVE OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE difficulties which exist in regard to the Christian religion do not pertain so much to the system of morals which it inculcates, or to the kind of life which it requires, or to the character of its Author, or to the measures which he adopted for the propagation of his religion, or to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul which it discloses, and its description of the future state, as to the fact that men are to be saved by the sufferings of the Author of the system as a sacrifice for human guilt. The character of the Author of the system is admitted to have been perfect; the system of morals which he taught is conceded to have been of the purest character; the manner of life which he required in his followers, it is not denied, is such as is best adapted to secure the happiness of the individual and the progress of society; the general influence of his sys-

tem of religion has been such undoubtedly as to promote the welfare of mankind; and the hopes which Christianity inspires are such as men must feel that it is desirable that they should cherish; but the grand difficulty in the system is, that it inculcates the idea that an *atonement* has been made through substituted suffering for human guilt, and that *somehow* the salvation of the soul is regarded as connected with the death of the Author of the system considered as a sacrifice or expiation for crime. What is meant by this sacrifice? To whom was it made? What ends does it accomplish in a system of religion? Why is not such a device found in human governments? How does it affect the divine character? And how does it make the pardon of sinners more proper than it would otherwise be? What was there to prevent the exercise of mercy on the part of God which has been removed by the atonement? How is pardon more consistent now that an atonement has been made than it otherwise would have been?

These difficulties, if drawn out in detail, would be expressed in some such specifications as the following, embodying thoughts which often pass through the minds of men when the doctrine of the atonement is suggested, though not often expressed in words:—

1. The device of an atonement has not been introduced into any human government; nor has it been found necessary to resort to it. Amidst all the methods of disposing of *crime* and of the criminal which have been suggested, it has never occurred to any legislator to substitute the sufferings of the in-

nocent in the place of the guilty. The principle has never been suggested as one to be acted on, and would never have been admitted if suggested, that the innocent should be punished for the guilty, or that the sufferings of the innocent could accomplish the purpose contemplated by the punishment of crime. In the numerous methods proposed for the maintenance of law; in the plans that have been suggested for the prevention of crime or for the reformation of the criminal, it has never been suggested as a practicable scheme in accomplishing these ends, that the sufferings of the innocent could be substituted for the punishment due to guilt. Even if innocent persons could be found who would be willing to take the place of the guilty,—if there were those of exalted rank and character who would consent to take the place of the murderer or the traitor, the law would not admit the substitution, nor would it be supposed that the interests of justice could be secured by such a substitution. Law is direct, earnest, personal: it deals with the guilty, not with the innocent.* It has demands on the offender against justice, not on the guiltless. It denounces the criminal, and inflicts punishment on *him*: it knows nothing of substituted suffering or of vicarious punishment. It recognises no transfer of criminality, and, consequently, no transfer of punishment. The man who is guilty of arson or forgery is imprisoned; the traitor or the murderer dies. No one can be required to be imprisoned or put to death in their place; nor would any voluntary submission of

* 1 Tim. i. 9.

the innocent to the sufferings appointed as the penalty of law be accepted in the place of the punishment of the offender himself. If the law in its operations is too severe; if there are mitigating circumstances in the case of which the law in its regular operations cannot take cognizance; or if the offender manifest such a spirit of penitence that the interests of justice will not suffer by his release, and that he may be safely restored to the bosom of the community, a '*pardon*' is granted, and the offender is discharged. In the act of granting such a pardon, however, no substituted sufferings in the place of the guilty would be allowed to constitute an argument why the pardon should be granted. It is, and it must be, in human governments, wholly on other considerations. But if there are no mitigating circumstances in the case; if the trial has been just and fair; if there is nothing in the character or deportment of the offender to justify the interposition of mercy, the law is allowed to take its course, and the offender languishes in prison or dies. All the arrangements of human governments are based on this; all that is done to maintain the honour of the law is concentrated on this; all that there is to satisfy the demands of justice is founded on this. No attempt to introduce substituted sufferings as a method of meeting the demand of law is made; none would be tolerated; none would be practicable.

It is not unnatural that these views should influence men's minds when they come to the consideration of the divine administration, and that what would be regarded as unnecessary or unjust in a human government should be considered as equally

unnecessary or unjust when applied to the government of God. Why, it would be asked, since his law is more perfect than any human law, and since he is himself more perfect than any human legislator or judge,—why, since the penalties of his laws can be adjusted more accurately and inflicted more perfectly than is possible under a human administration,—why, since it is possible for him to extend pardon without any bias on his part, and without any danger of error, only in those cases where it ought to be extended, and in all cases where it should be,—why, since, under his administration, every necessary precaution can be taken to prevent any evil from the exercise of the pardoning power, should a device like that of the atonement be regarded as necessary? Since such an arrangement has never been found necessary in a human administration, the question may be asked with fairness, why, in a system absolutely perfect, as the divine government is alleged to be, and under the administration of one infinitely wise and just, should it be found necessary to resort to a device which has not been found needful under *any* form of human administration? And if such an arrangement as that of an atonement by the substituted sufferings of the innocent in place of the guilty would be impracticable in a human government, and would violate some of the plainest and most obvious principles of justice, how can it be introduced into the divine administration? Is that just in God which would be unjust in man? Is that desirable in the divine government which would be undesirable in the best form of human government? Is that needful under a perfect form of administration which

has not been required even in the confessedly imperfect administration of human law?

2. It would be regarded as an objection to the doctrine of the atonement that nothing like this is found in the actual administration of the affairs of the world under the divine government, or that, in the actual course of events, there is no such substitution of the suffering of the innocent for the guilty as is contemplated in the atonement. There is evidently, under the divine government, some *system* pertaining to the treatment of *sin*. Sin has been in the world as far back as any historical records go,—except the single record that the first man was sinless at first, though of his conduct *while* sinless we have almost no record; and there has been, under the divine administration, what may be regarded as *a course of events* in respect to the transgression of law. There are sufficient intimations that there is a divine *plan* in regard to the treatment of sinners. In other words, there are certain results which, under the divine administration, will follow the commission of crime. No one could deny that various methods have been resorted to to express the divine feelings in respect to sin, and designed to check its career; but in the actual administration of human affairs, apart from revelation, there has been no device discernible by which it is contemplated to meet the consequences of sin by the substituted sufferings of the innocent considered as an expiation for guilt.

The actual government of God in the world proceeds on the supposition that the guilty only are to be punished. The penalty of the law has reference

only to them. Its threatenings rest on them alone. It has no denunciations for the innocent. The evils resulting from intemperance as a penalty of law do not pertain to the sober; the results of avarice belong to the covetous; the consequences of licentiousness descend on those who violate the laws of chastity, and not on the pure. No other system, it would be said, would answer the purpose of a moral administration. In no other mode could we learn from the actual course of events what is the character of the moral Governor of the universe. No other system would fairly interpret his character; under no other system could we learn what he is. The stability of his administration, and its influence as a moral system, both depend on the principle that his creatures shall be treated as they *deserve*, and that guilt and innocence shall not be transferred at pleasure; or, which is the same thing in effect, that the results of guilt and innocence shall not be made to change places by an arbitrary purpose. It would be unjust, it would be said, in a righteous system of administration, to treat the guilty as if they were innocent, and equally unjust to treat the innocent as if they were guilty. The objects of a just moral administration are to save the innocent from the penalties which come upon the guilty and to punish the guilty, and thus to maintain the principles of law; not to transfer responsibilities, penalties, and rewards from one to the other. The stability of the divine administration depends on the steadiness with which this principle is pursued, and on the amount of certainty which can be

secured, by a steady administration of the principle, that this may always be expected to be so.

The essential idea of an atonement, it would be alleged, is a violation of this principle. Contrary to all the well-understood arrangements of law and justice,—arrangements so essential to the stability of the moral administration of the universe,—it represents the punishment of the sins of the world as passing over from the guilty to the innocent. It transfers the entire penalty of the law, in relation to the race, from the actual violators of the law to one who never violated it in any respect. It arrests and changes the regular course of justice, introducing an entirely new principle, and one at variance with the settled course of things, by transferring the entire guilt of the world to the head of the only perfectly innocent being who ever dwelt upon the earth.

3. A third difficulty in the atonement considered in reference to the administration of the affairs of the world is, that it seems to be based on a view of the divine character which is unamiable, severe, harsh, stern. The doctrine of the atonement, it is said, represents God as not disposed to show mercy until it is procured by the blood of the innocent; as unwilling to pardon on the manifestation of repentance and reformation, unless the shedding of innocent blood shall have intervened; as demanding that the exact and the utmost penalty of the law shall be inflicted either on the guilty or on a substitute; as, in fact, so intent on the infliction of the penalty of law that there is in no case a *remission* of the penalty, but merely a *transfer* of it from the guilty

to the innocent. According to the representations in the plan of the atonement, it would seem that no mercy is manifested toward the guilty which is not the result of purchase; that none are in fact forgiven in reference to whom the whole penalty of the law has not been borne by a substitute; that when God *seems* to forgive it is in appearance only; or that he has been *changed* by the atonement from a stern and inexorable being to a being who is mild and forgiving, and that, after all, even this is in appearance only, since he forgives only when pardon has been purchased by so much suffering for so much guilt, and since, if the atonement had not been made, mercy would no more have been manifested to man than to rebel angels.

It would be further said on this point, on the one hand, that among men there is no characteristic more amiable or more universally commended than that which prompts to the forgiveness of offences, and, on the other, that there is none more unamiable than that which never forgives; that no government is more stern, harsh, and severe than that where the pardon of the guilty is never contemplated, and where no provision is made for it; that in ordinary life we have constant occasion either to manifest the spirit of forgiveness toward others or to avail ourselves of it in their forgiving us; that there is nothing that marks a more elevated state of social life than that in which this disposition prevails, and none that has more decisively the characteristic of a state of barbarism than that in which this disposition does *not* exist; and that the real progress of society is more distinctly marked by the disposition

to forgive offenders, and to lay aside the spirit of revenge, than by almost any other advance which society makes. And it would be further added that in the gospel itself there is no spirit that is more frequently commended, and no duty that is more constantly enjoined, than that of forgiveness; and that there is none that is more frequently spoken of with entire disapprobation than the opposite.* Everywhere, and at all times, we are required to manifest a spirit of forgiveness toward our fellow-men, no matter how often they offend and no matter how aggravated may be the offence.† It would be said, moreover, that in the precepts which enjoin forgiveness we are constantly referred to the example of God himself as a *reason* why we should forgive, and as showing the *manner* in which we are to forgive those who offend us.‡ And yet it would be asked,—perhaps with no spirit of humility or reverence, but it would be asked as indicating what is felt by many minds in regard to this subject,—What would be the spirit which would be manifested among men in this respect if they were to imitate God according to the representations in the atonement? that is, if they were never to forgive unless an expiation or an atonement had been made for the offence; if they were to insist that a full equivalent should be paid for all the wrong done them, either by the offenders themselves or by a substitute; if they never pardoned unless in cases where the innocent had been made to suffer for the guilty; or even if they should admit the sufferings

* Matt. xviii. 32, 33. † Matt. xviii. 21, 22. ‡ Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.

of the innocent *at all* as a reason why the guilty should go unpunished. *Could* the principle implied in the atonement be introduced into the common transactions between man and man? *Could* the example of God in this respect, supposing that he regards it as necessary in order to a reconciliation between him and those who offend against him that an atonement should be made, be held up to man for imitation? *Could* it be made a virtue of a high order, or a virtue at all, to imitate the example? Does not God, in fact, in the New Testament, *require* us to act on a different principle from that on which it is alleged that he acts, enjoining it on us to forgive those who offend against us freely, fully, frankly? Does he not everywhere in the New Testament *commend* a spirit entirely different from that which is necessarily implied in demanding an atonement? And can we believe that he *would* commend a spirit that should be based on the same principle as his own conduct in requiring an atonement as an indispensable condition of restoration to favour? What would be the condition of the world if, in every case where an offence is committed between man and man, neighbour and neighbour, parent and child, a full equivalent for the wrong done should be demanded before the offence could be forgiven? if there should be the utmost exaction of justice before mercy could be proffered? and if, when this could not be rendered by the offender himself, it should be required that an innocent being should pay the penalty in order that there might be a willingness to forgive? Two neighbours are at variance. What would be the effect of introducing a

principle like the atonement into their quarrel? In default of the offender being able to make an expiation, or to satisfy the demands of the injured one, what would be the effect of requiring that an innocent third person should be made to suffer all that the offender *ought* himself in justice to endure? A child violates the command of his father and exposes himself to punishment by his offence. What would be the effect in the family if the father should refuse to forgive him until an innocent brother had manifested a willingness to endure, and had actually endured, all that was due to the offender himself? These illustrations may seem *harsh* as in any way applicable to the divine arrangement of the atonement, and they are not intended to be in any proper sense an illustration of the real nature of that doctrine; but they are designed to illustrate what is often passing through the minds of men when this subject is suggested, and to show the nature of one of the obstacles—though it may not be often stated in this form—to the reception of the doctrine of the atonement by large classes of men.

It is not improbable, also, that the common representations of the atonement are often regarded as but a modification of an idea in the ancient system of Paganism,—the idea of *appeasing* angry gods by sacrifice. The essential idea in those sacrifices undoubtedly was that of turning away the anger of the gods,—of doing something to mitigate their wrath,—of presenting a *reason* why they should not take vengeance, or satiate their indignation in the punishment of men. The reason or the consideration in the case was supposed to lie in the fact that

what was implied in the idea of wrath or vengeance had been fully met by the blood and sufferings of the innocent victim, and that, therefore, that wrath or vengeance was fully *appeased* or *satisfied*. The sacrifice of an animal, or of a prisoner taken in battle, or of an innocent child, might, it was supposed, *satisfy* the thirst for blood on the part of the offended deity and render him propitious; that is, so *appease* his wrath as to make him willing to show mercy, or to release the offender as if he had himself borne the full penalty of the law. This idea, as it lies in the minds of many persons, cannot be better expressed, perhaps, than in the following words, copied from a popular work of the present time:—“On one side is an offended God,—a somewhat grander Jupiter, with all his thunderbolts suspended over us, and his arm raised to exterminate the world. On the other side, sullen, gloomy, half terrified, half defiant, trying hard to buy him off, are we, his revolted subjects; and midway between stands a grand, inexplicable Personage, whom we by some inexplicable means, have persuaded to conspire with us to buy a reluctant pardon from an angry Jove above.”*

How extensively this view of the nature of the atonement prevails, it is, of course, impossible to know, for there are deep feelings in the hearts of men which are never expressed in language; but it may be presumed that the thoughts suggested above are far from being uncommon among men,

* Representation of the ‘Broad Church’ views, in Blackwood’s Magazine, July, 1855.

and that many more are cherishing those views than would be willing to avow them. No one can doubt that the thoughts above expressed embody substantially the ideas of the Pagan world in regard to the wrath of the offended gods and the means of appeasing that wrath; and no one need doubt that multitudes are willing to understand the Christian doctrine of the atonement as founded on the same views, and as designed to effect the same object. Nor need it be denied that there have been representations of the atonement by its advocates and friends which would go far to justify this. How far these views are a correct representation of the doctrine will be considered in another part of this work.

4. A similar difficulty in regard to the atonement arises from the idea that it might have been avoided altogether; that God, who has infinite power, could have prevented that state of things which has made such an interposition necessary, if it is necessary at all; that the scheme, in fact, represents God as causing or suffering sin to be introduced into the world *with a view* to an atonement, or to such a manifestation of his character as would be connected with an atonement; and that the necessity for this would have been avoided if he had prevented the existence of evil. The atonement, it would be said, is designed, according to the usual representations of it, to furnish an exhibition of the character of God such as has been made nowhere else in his dealings with men, or to develop traits of character which could not have developed but for this; and evil was allowed to come into the system in order to furnish

a means of the manifestation of the character of God which could not have been otherwise made; as if, it would be said, defects had been purposely allowed in the construction of a machine in order to furnish an occasion to exhibit in a higher degree the skill of the inventor:—the existence of the *defect*, as well as the *remedy*, both being designed to bring out in its fulness the character of the inventor. In accordance with this view, it would be said that the doctrine of the atonement implies that there are certain attributes of the divine character which could be developed fully in the ordinary works of creation and Providence, but that there are certain others which can be developed only through the medium of sin and misery, and that, as it is desirable that the divine character should be *fully* displayed, evil has been allowed to come into the system *in order* to furnish an opportunity for the exhibition of a method of correcting it, thus developing certain attributes of the divine nature which could not otherwise be made known. The idea, according to the doctrine of the atonement, it would be said, seems to be, that there are certain attributes of the divine nature—as power, wisdom, skill—which can be sufficiently manifested in the works of creation contemplated as without sin or suffering; but that there are certain other characteristics of the divine mind which, in order to their being displayed, need the instrumentality of sin and suffering in his creatures, and that the fact that they *can* be displayed through that medium is a sufficient reason why the race was suffered to fall, and why sin and woe were permitted to spread over the world; or,

in other words, that the *benefits* of such a display of the divine character will be a full equivalent for all the acknowledged evils resulting from the existence of sin, and all the woes that the race will endure. A slight illustration of this idea would be, that it is a sufficient reason why a wasting and painful disease should be suffered to spread through a community, that it gives occasion for the display of skill and benevolence in the healing art; or that, though multitudes suffer and numbers die, still, a sufficient reason for allowing the introduction of the disease would be found in the manifestation of what could not otherwise be known,—the benevolence implied in a remedial system. Would not greater benevolence, it would be asked, be shown by *preventing* the disease altogether? Is not manifest injustice done to the suffering and the dying in bringing these woes upon them in order that there may be a display of the benevolent character of others? Could we vindicate an arrangement by which a pestilential disease should be sent upon a community, sweeping multitudes into the grave, *in order* that there might be a display of the mercy implied in the healing art? And can we vindicate the arrangement by which it was contemplated that a world should fall into sin, and an entire race of beings otherwise innocent and happy be subjected to the evils of apostasy, and pain and woe spread over the face of a beautiful part of creation, and all forms of crime be committed, and vast numbers perish forever, *in order* that the character of God might be more fully developed? Is not a grievous wrong thus done to an innocent race? And *can* there be any equivalent for

such a manifest wrong in the fact that the divine character is thus more fully displayed? Could it be an equivalent to the multitudes that should suffer from the plague, or the smallpox, or the cholera, that a remedy was found out which would display in the highest degree the skill of the discoverer, and might in fact save multitudes of others from the ravages of the disease? And can any conceivable exhibition of the divine character, either to this world or to the universe at large, be a sufficient compensation for the introduction of sin into the system, for the wide, deep, and enduring desolations that sin has caused? If the question could have been submitted to the universe of created intelligences, can we suppose that any one race among those created intelligences could have been found who would have seen such manifest good as likely to result from the arrangement, that they would have been willing to be made the subjects of it?

And, in connection with this, it would be said that the whole scheme, even if it could be vindicated, would be but an indirect and 'round-about' way of reaching an end wholly unlike what we are accustomed to see in the arrangements which God has made elsewhere. "The thing objected against this scheme of the gospel," says Bishop Butler, "is that it seems to suppose God was reduced to the necessity of a long series of intricate means in order to accomplish his ends, the recovering and salvation of the world; in like sort as men, for want of understanding or power, not being able to come at their ends directly, are forced to go round-about ways and to make use of many perplexed contrivances to

arrive at them."* Why, it would be asked, did not God rather prevent the evil altogether, than take such a method to remedy it? Why suffer it to come into the system to be checked, if checked at all, by a slow process extending through many ages,—a process, too, which has never yet proved itself to be effectual? And why, since the evil has come into the system, and since men under the system actually become guilty, does not God pardon offenders at once, if penitent, and restore them to his favour? Why, if he is a benevolent being, is there a necessity of some stupendous intermediate work to make even repentance acceptable to God, and to dispose him to the exercise of mercy?

5. It would be said, also, that, after all, we do not understand the nature and the bearing of the proposed remedy. What does it do? To whom is the atonement made? What is its bearing on the character of God? How is it an equivalent for the punishment of the guilty? In what way does it maintain law? In what way does it expiate crime? It is admitted, it would be said, by the advocates of the atonement themselves, that it is impossible to explain its exact relation to the divine character and government, or to show *how* it facilitates the work of pardon. No one has been able to explain in what way it accomplishes the object contemplated; nor is it pretended that the manner in which it does this is stated in the Bible. It is admitted by its friends, it would be said, to be among those mysteries of the divine administration which God has not thought

* Analogy, Part II. ch. iv.

proper to disclose, or which may be wholly beyond the power of man to comprehend. Though claimed to be among the highest devices of divine wisdom, yet no one understands it; though declared to be expressive of the highest benevolence, yet no one knows how it is so; though said to be an arrangement by which God vindicates his justice and maintains the honour of his law, yet no one is able to show how it does this; and though it is asserted that it meets evils which it has been found impossible to meet in a human administration, yet no one is able to show that it would be proper to introduce such a system into a human administration if it could be done.

Under these circumstances, and with these difficulties of the system full in view, it is asked, how can it be proposed to mankind as an arrangement fitted to meet the evils of sin in the world? So remote does it lie from the ordinary course of things in the divine administration; so unlike is it to what occurs or to what is found necessary under any form of human government; so difficult is it of explanation in its alleged bearing on the divine government and character; so mysterious and incomprehensible is it in respect to the question how it makes it consistent for God to pardon a sinner; so various are the explanations of its relation to the divine character and government by its advocates and friends; and so absurd and contradictory are many of the theories of the atonement, that, although if it be true it is the central doctrine of the system of God's moral administration, it leaves, after all, more questions unanswered and more difficulties

unresolved than any other doctrine of natural or revealed religion; and perhaps it would be added that it creates or originates many new perplexities in an ineffectual attempt to explain those previously existing which are so embarrassing to the human mind. The difficulties which are felt in regard to the atonement present perhaps a more real and wide-spread obstacle to the reception of the Christian system than any of the avowed arguments of infidelity, and are operating on large classes of men who would not be influenced by the common objections of infidelity to the authority of the system of revealed truth; men who would not desire to be classed among skeptics, but who see so many difficulties in the whole doctrine of the atonement that they cannot embrace a system of religion which makes that doctrine the basis of all hope of heaven.

It cannot be improper, then, to inquire whether the atonement, as represented in the Bible, does not meet a want which is felt under every form of the administration of law; whether it does not remove difficulties which have everywhere embarrassed the subject of pardon; whether there are not perplexities in administering government everywhere which could be removed by such an arrangement as that of an atonement; whether the doctrine of the atonement has not met a want in the human mind which has never been met under any other proposed arrangement; and whether, in devising such a scheme, a God of infinite wisdom and beneficence has not introduced into *his* administration that which has been felt everywhere to be necessary, but which

has elsewhere been sought in vain. Though there may be depths in regard to it which human wisdom cannot fathom, yet it may be also true that there are difficulties in every system of administering law which could be solved in no way but by such an arrangement as an atonement. To show this will be a leading design of this Essay.

CHAPTER II.

DIFFICULTIES ON THE SUBJECT OF PARDON.

IN the administration of law, few subjects have been found more difficult than that of *pardon*. It has been assumed in all governments that law would be violated; and in all, or nearly all, it has been assumed that there would be cases in which it would be proper that the penalty of the law should not be inflicted. In most governments where there is a *constitution*, provision has been made for the exercise of pardon in the constitution itself; and it has become a settled and well-understood maxim, in administering the government, that cases may be expected to occur where it would be proper to exercise the pardoning power. There have been, indeed, absolute tyrants who never showed mercy to offenders; but there has been no government, founded on a constitution, where it has been an established principle that pardon is in no case to be extended to the guilty.

An atonement is founded on the fact that men are sinners, or transgressors of law, and on the fact that there are difficulties in the way of pardon which cannot be overcome but by some such arrangement as that which is implied in an atonement.

The difficulties in the way of pardon must be substantially the same in the divine administration as in a human government. It is proper, therefore, to inquire what those difficulties are:—

Those difficulties are such as exist in the following cases. 1. If pardon should *never* be extended to the guilty, or if the penalty of the law should be *always* rigidly executed. 2. If it is *often* extended to the guilty, or if there is a *frequent* exercise of the pardoning power. 3. If it should *always* be extended to the guilty, or if the penalty of the law were *never* inflicted; and 4. In any and every case where pardon is extended by one—as in this respect he must be—above the courts of law, in its bearing on the regular administration of justice.

1. If pardon should *never* be extended to the guilty, or if the penalty of the law should be *always* rigidly executed. It has never, indeed, as already remarked, been assumed in any government that this was to be a settled principle, however tyrants may in some cases have acted on it. But it is clear that it *might* be assumed; and it is proper, in the consideration of the subject, to inquire what consequences would follow if it should be assumed and acted on.

The government in such a case would be one of severe and unrelenting *justice*. It would be, if such a thing could be secured, a government of perfect law, or a perfect administration of law. The principle would be that an equal and exact penalty for the violation of law should be specified; that the exact amount of criminality should be ascertained; that there should be no improper influence exerted on the mind of a judge or jury; that a just sentence

should be in all cases pronounced; and that the law should always be suffered to take its course.

It is easy to conceive that there might be such a government,—a government which would be so severely and exactly *just*, that, in this respect, there could be no ground of complaint against it. Every rule of law might be observed; every proper degree of care be taken that the exact nature of the offence might be determined; every reasonable precaution might be resorted to in the admission of evidence; every desirable security for a just trial might be granted to an accused person; all that has been regarded as valuable, and that *is* valuable, in securing the rights of men accused of crime, might be maintained; all that has been worked out in the progress of society, now regarded as so essential to justice and as such inestimable safeguards for true liberty, in the trial by jury, in the writ of *habeas corpus*, in a public trial, in knowing the charge alleged, in confronting witnesses, in the right of cross-examination, might be so observed that on none of these accounts could there be a ground of complaint. Nor in reference to the sentence might there be a just ground of complaint. It might be neither more nor less than was prescribed by the law, neither more nor less than exact justice demanded. And, moreover, the law might be administered with the utmost tenderness on the part of the officers of justice. Every thing might be done in the trial to protect the rights of the accused; every thing might be humane in the execution of the sentence. Neither a Scroggs nor a Jeffreys, it may be supposed, would ever preside on the bench, and the law might always be

administered with more than the purity and kindness of a Hale.

But, if it were an admitted principle that pardon was *never* to be extended to the guilty, that principle would be at war with some of the finest feelings of our nature; for there is a law of our nature which requires that pardon *should* in some instances be extended to the guilty. We are so made that we cannot but feel that this is desirable and right. We ourselves are prompted by our nature, as well as by the precepts of revelation, to forgive an offender; and there is a demand in the very constitution of our souls which is not met if this is never done. Upright, and firm, and just, as a man may be, yet we feel that there is a defect in his character if he is *only* upright, and firm, and just, and that, however we may *confide* in him where questions of *right* are involved, he is nevertheless a man who cannot be *loved*. The same would be true in a government. However just and equal it might be in its decisions, and however impartial it might be in its administrations, it would, if pardon were never exercised, drive its decisions over some of the finest feelings, and be in conflict with some of the noblest impulses of our nature. For there are cases where pardon is desirable and proper; cases in which—whatever care may have been manifested to secure the ends of justice, whatever impartiality may have been evinced on the trial, whatever indulgence may have been shown to the convicted man, and whatever may have been the justice in the verdict of a jury—it is proper that there should be an interposition of the pardoning power to arrest the execution of the law. Under

every constitutional government, or every government of law, men have been convinced of this, and accordingly the pardoning power has been lodged either with the executive or the judges. This provision has been found under all governments but those of tyrants; and a government where this provision was *not* found would be, in the nature of the case, the government of a tyrant. Moreover, this has been, more than any thing else in the administration of the laws, a matter of discretion. How many may be pardoned, under what circumstances, with what manifestations of feeling on the part of the guilty, with what promises or pledges, express or implied, if any, and with what expressions of sympathy or appeals for pardon on the part of the community in behalf of the guilty, if any, have all been points beyond the control of the law. How much or how little of these shall be requisite to secure the favourable intervention of the pardoning power, has been a point which the law has never attempted to prescribe.

That there is a deep feeling in the nature of man which demands that the pardoning power shall be exercised in some cases, is apparent from the ease with which petitions can be procured in any community in cases where the exercise of the law, though strictly just, has been regarded as too severe. This, though sometimes, is not always, mawkish sentimentalism; nor is it always, though it often may be, based on an unwillingness that punishment should *ever* be inflicted. It lies deeper than this. It is the manifestation of a law of our nature. It arises from the fact that we have been endowed with the emo-

tions of sympathy and compassion as well as with a stern sense of justice. There *are* cases where every benevolent feeling of a community, however resolute that community might be in the demands of justice, and however deep its convictions might be that the law should be sustained, would be gratified by the exercise of mercy, and where every feeling of that community would be outraged if such clemency were never shown. Such cases are too well known to require a distinct specification. The considerations which appeal to a community in such cases are those which are derived from the great age, or the tender age, or the sex, of the guilty; from the circumstances of temptation under which the crime was committed; from the want of education or the mental feebleness of the criminal; from the fact that a family may be dependent on him; from the impaired health of the prisoner; from the belief that the ends of justice may be secured by the mere fact of his condemnation without inflicting on him the sentence; from the conduct of a prisoner after conviction, and the belief that he has so reformed that it may be safe to restore him again to his family and to the community; perhaps from the former public services of the guilty man. In all such cases it is left for the executive to judge as to the propriety of remitting the sentence of the law; in reference to such cases it would be an outrage on all the finer feelings of our nature if there were *no* provision to meet them and if the law was always inexorably to take its course.

It follows from this that in a government in which there was no provision for pardon in any case, though it might be strictly *just*, and though it might

in this respect deserve the confidence of mankind, it would violate some of the noblest principles that have been implanted in the soul of man. It would contemplate man not as he is, but as a being destitute of compassion, sympathy, and kindness. It would regard him not as possessing, in connection with a sense of justice, a feeling of humanity, but as endowed with a mere sense of justice,—stern, severe, inexorable.

But this is not man; this is not society. Man has been formed in a different manner, and society is made up of different materials. There are in the bosoms of individual men and in society different elements; and none of them can be safely disregarded even in the strictest administration of law. Man, individual or associated, is not all intellect, nor is his only characteristic that of a stern sense of justice. He has a heart as well as a head, and there is in his bosom a sense of humanity as well as a sense of right. There are demands in his nature for the exercise of sympathy and forgiveness as well as for the exercise of justice and the maintenance of law; and a government, a court, or an individual, where these are ignored or disregarded, violates some of the noblest principles of our nature and some of the most important arrangements of the Creator. This feeling of our nature—this demand for the exercise of sympathy, compassion, and forgiveness, has led to the conviction already adverted to, that there *should be*, in all human governments, some arrangement for the remission of the penalty of the law in certain cases, or to the conviction that the law should not in all instances be rigidly and sternly executed, and

is the reason why a power of pardon has been lodged in the hands of the executive or the judges.

May it not be added also, since God has implanted this feeling so deeply in the human soul, and made the manifestation of it so essential to the good of society, that it may be inferred that it is a principle in his own nature and in his own administration? Would he make necessary in a human government a principle which has no place in his own? Would he implant in the human soul what has no counterpart in his own nature? Can we suppose that his nature is severely and sternly *just*, with no elements of sympathy, when he has made compassion so essential a characteristic in the soul of man, and its exercise so indispensable to the welfare of society? And can we avoid, from this consideration, the inference that there will be found in his nature a disposition to pardon, and that there will be found somewhere in his administration an arrangement for the exercise of mercy? As man individually is in some proper sense made in the image of God, and as man associated with his fellow-man for purposes of government represents in some proper sense the administration of the Great Governor of the universe, it may be inferred that a counterpart of what is so essential to the character of the individual here, and of what is made so necessary in all forms of human administration, will be found to exist in the character of the Creator himself, and be manifested in a perfect form under his administration.

2. A second difficulty in regard to the manifestation of mercy in a human administration occurs if

pardon is *often* extended to those who are guilty. There have been, and there are, forms of administration where this in fact occurs. Either from a slight sense of the obligations of justice in a community, or from lax views of the nature of law, or from a mawkish sensibility in regard to punishment, or from false forms and views of humanity, or from weakness, instability, a feeble sense of right, and a false compassion in an executive, it sometimes occurs that 'pardons' are greatly multiplied, and that the conviction of a guilty man constitutes scarcely the slightest evidence that the sentence of the law will be executed. The decisions of courts are set aside on the slightest considerations, and men guilty of atrocious and admitted crimes are turned unpunished and unreformed again upon the community. The evils of this are too obvious to need illustration.

But there are cases, as has been before remarked, where the interposition of the pardoning power seems to be demanded by the circumstances of the case, and by the appeals to that law of our nature which prompts to the exercise of mercy; cases where the rigid sentence of the law would be too severe, or where there were mitigating circumstances in the commission of the offence, or where the conduct of the convicted man seems to furnish evidence that all the desirable ends of conviction have been obtained, and where it may be hoped that a permanent reformation has been secured, or where the reason or the health of the prisoner is endangered, and humanity seems to demand that he should be released, and that a heavier infliction than that contemplated by the law—the loss of reason, or death

in the prison—should not come upon him. In these circumstances, as has been remarked before, all the promptings of our nature demand that the pardoning power should be exercised, and all the benevolent feelings of a community are gratified by the exercise of executive clemency.

And yet pardon, under any circumstances, always does much to weaken the strong arm of the law. It is a proclamation that crime *may*, in certain circumstances, be committed with impunity. It is an announcement to offenders that they have a double hope of escaping punishment,—a hope that they will not be detected and convicted, and then a hope that if they are convicted they may, like others, be partakers of the executive clemency. It is manifest that this feeling will exist just in proportion to the *frequency* with which the pardoning power is exercised. Every guilty man discharged from prison becomes thus a messenger sent into the community—and especially into the community of thieves, robbers, pirates, and murderers—to announce that crime *may* be committed with impunity; that the law is *not* rigid and inexorable in its inflictions, and that little is to be apprehended from its threatenings. And it is to be observed, further, that the effect of one act of pardon will be more deep and wide-spread than the effect of the continued punishment of a large number of the guilty. The imprisoned or executed convict is in a great degree forgotten. If imprisoned, he is confined to a cell to which the community has no access. The memory of his trial and of his conviction passes out of the public recollection. He is not seen, except by his keeper, by his

chaplain, and by a few of his friends. By a refinement, too, in modern prison-discipline,—whether wise or not is not now the inquiry,—his very *name* is concealed, and he is only numerically designated. Between him and his fellow-prisoners, as far as possible, all communication is interdicted. His place in the community is forgotten, and every tie that bound him to the living world is sundered. As far as it is possible, even in the infliction of the punishment, his person, his name, his very existence, are forgotten. He is dead to law, dead to his family, dead to the community. And when the time for which he was committed to prison is expired,—if it does expire, and if he does not die in his cell, unpitied, unreformed, and forgotten,—all possible care is taken to obliterate the memory of his name, of his crime, of his trial, and of his imprisonment, and to restore him, with no recollection of his offence, and no suspicion on his character, to the community. Often he goes to a place where he is unknown, and where, his name having been concealed or being changed, every trace of his conviction and his punishment is obliterated. And if, in the other supposed case, he is executed for his crime, the memory of that also soon dies away. The terror or the attractiveness of the scene of execution is over; the public sympathy, and with it the public interest in him, is exhausted; a portion of the community feel that he died justly, and lose all interest in him; and on the other and the larger portion no impression favourable to law and virtue was made by his death: he passes out of the sight of the living and out of the memory of mankind.

But not such is the case with a pardoned man. No attempt is made to conceal the interest which is felt in him in securing the arrest of the penalty of the law in his case. A deep public sympathy is excited in his favour; the names of the respectable, the virtuous, and the pious are easily obtained to a petition for his pardon; he acquires a degree of publicity and of *popularity* which could never have been his if he had been a virtuous man; no attempt is made to conceal *his* name, and he is restored to the community as a public proof that crime *may* be committed with impunity, that there *are* cases where the regular sentence of the law is too severe and where humanity should be allowed to triumph over justice. Every instance of this nature becomes such a proclamation; and, while the influence of a trial and a conviction *in favour* of the claims of justice may be forgotten, the influence of the pardon, as operating *against* the claims of justice, will not soon die away. Just in proportion as such instances are multiplied do they operate to weaken the strong arm of the law, and to proclaim to the community that the law *may be* violated with impunity.

This effect it has never been possible to prevent in a human administration by any safeguards or checks; nor is there any way in which it can be done. No practicable devices have been found to arrest or counteract the natural effect of a frequent exercise of the pardoning power in rendering the administration of justice weak and ineffectual, and in furnishing an encouragement for the commission of crime.

3. This result would be still more disastrous if pardon were *always* extended to the guilty, or even

if it were proclaimed that pardon *could*, by any arrangement, be extended to all the guilty. In such a case, what would be the use of the forms of law, of the arrest, indictment, and trial of the guilty, of the verdict of a jury, of the sentence of a judge? If in each and every case of such trial there were present in the court-room an officer of the executive intrusted with pardoning power, or if an instrument of pardon were made out and executed *before* the trial, or if a blank form of pardon, properly signed and sealed, were always at hand ready to be filled up with the name of the man whom a jury should find 'guilty,' or if it were certain that a pardon *would be* granted, it is evident that the whole process of trial would be a farce and the sentence of the law a bugbear.

Further: in no community would it be safe to have all the prison-doors unbarred and the whole multitude of convicts thrown upon the world. Who, in such a case, in the neighbourhood of a crowded prison would sleep calmly at night? Who would feel for a moment that his property was secure? Who would feel that his house and home were safe? that his wife and children could lie down secure? There could be no arrangement by which such a general jail-delivery could be rendered consistent with the safety of society. No one would wish to live in the vicinity of such a prison. Property would become valueless and the place would become a desert; and though the vast and terrific power of thus discharging all the imprisoned convicts in a community has been intrusted to the executive in each commonwealth, yet it never has

been exercised, nor has it ever been contemplated that it *should* be or *could* be. There is no community in which it would be safe to have all prisons thrown open and all the inmates discharged; nor are there any arrangements in the power of man by which this could be *made* safe. If it had ever been contemplated that an executive *would* thus throw open all the doors of prisons, the pardoning power would never have been granted; if such a case ever *should* occur in a community, that power would be at once withdrawn. At present society is protected from this evil by general public opinion, and it has not been found necessary to provide any *special* checks against the exercise of the pardoning power; but if it should be abused in the manner above supposed, the community would find it necessary at once to provide some suitable and effectual restraints against the possibility of an occurrence that would render nugatory all the existing arrangements for the administration of justice, and endanger every thing that is sacred and valuable in a commonwealth.

Moreover, no community would regard it as safe to *offer* pardon to all criminals on any condition whatever. The *offer* of pardon is, indeed, not now made to any one, and the *hope* of pardon in any case is derived only from the fact that the pardoning power is lodged with the executive, the judges, or the legislature, and from the fact that it is so *often* exercised as to constitute the basis of a hope that it *may* be exercised in other cases also. But it is never *offered* to any one. It is never made avowedly dependent on any conditions of penitence, of refor-

mation, or of pledges for future good behaviour. If these things become considerations on the ground of which pardon is extended to the guilty, it is not because it is *offered* on these conditions, or because they could be safely made conditions of pardon, but because in such cases they may have their influence on the minds of those who are intrusted with the pardoning power. But there can be no doubt as to what would be the effect if pardon were indiscriminately offered to all criminals on *any* conditions whatever. Forthwith all prisons would be filled with hypocrites and pretenders, in whose bosoms there would be no real reformation, but who would assume the appearance of reformation until the pardon was obtained. There could be no security for future good behaviour; there could be no infallible proof of genuine reformation; there could be no ground of reliance that all the indications of compliance with the conditions were not hypocritically assumed for the purpose of obtaining a discharge from prison. No civil government has the power of originating an influence that shall be extended into the future life of the convict, and that shall become the guarantee that the community will suffer no wrong by the indiscriminate discharge of the guilty on the profession of repentance and reformation.

There is not a government on earth that could safely venture to make the unlimited offer of pardon which God in the gospel makes to guilty men. There it is unlimited. It is on simple conditions,—conditions that may be easily complied with by all. Interwoven with those conditions there is a *security* for the future good conduct of those who are par-

done; a guarantee to the universe that no wrong would be experienced if even all the guilty should be pardoned. That offer of pardon excludes none even by name, none by description. No man is presumed to be so great an offender, to have committed crimes of so aggravated a character against God and his law, to be so powerful or so dangerous, that it would be unsafe to forgive him. In every case, no matter how great the crimes have been, it is presumed that an influence pervades the arrangement for pardon which will secure ever onward the future good conduct of him who is forgiven, and that he who has been most distinguished for crime will hereafter be as eminent for obedience to the law. What those arrangements are, will be the subject of subsequent consideration. The remark now made is that it has been impossible thus far in the world to introduce those arrangements into human legislation, and that, consequently, there has been no community where a universal offer of pardon could be made to the guilty; no commonwealth where it would be safe to throw open all prison-doors and to discharge all convicts upon the world.

4. There is another difficulty on the subject of pardon which must occur in a human administration whenever, and with whatever precautions, it may be exercised. It is, that it sets aside the decisions of the courts, and, by diminishing confidence in their wisdom, lessens their influence in the administration of the laws. Every act of pardon is, as far as it goes, a proclamation either that the law itself is defective, or that there has been an error in its administration. It is a public statement that there is no tribunal

which can be always confided in ; that there is need of a higher power to sit again in judgment on the highest decisions of the law, and perhaps to reverse them. And it is not merely a rehearing of the case, as in a court of error, where all the forms and securities of law may be observed ; but it is a rehearing where the precautions which the law has thrown around the administration of justice in the arraignment, the indictment, the trial by jury, the examination of witnesses, and the pleadings in the cause, are dispensed with, and where, in most instances, the case is left, without these forms of security, to the decision of a single man. Practically the judgment of the court and the decisions of the law are declared to be wrong. Nothing is done to assert the authority of the court or to maintain the influence of the law while the guilty man is discharged, and two branches of the government—the judicial and the executive—come directly into conflict. In every case of pardon it may be supposed that an executive would *desire* to maintain the authority of law as administered in the courts of justice, and from this consideration, if there were no other, would hesitate to interpose ; for the executive never *cannot* interpose without practically doing *so much* to set aside the authority of the law and the regular course of justice. It is to be observed, also, that it has cost much, in the progress of society, to *secure* an arrangement by which justice may be dispensed, and that it is of the highest importance to maintain the authority of courts of law. There is value in all the arrangements and the processes of justice ; in the appointment of judges, in the modes of indict-

ment, in the trial by jury, in the forms of pleading, in the respect shown to the sentence of a court. All these bear directly on the interests of a community; all are to be regarded as safeguards of justice; all are results of long struggles in past ages for the protection of rights; and all go into the sense of security which a community feels in reference to the nature of citizenship. Each one of the arrangements which now enter into the administration of justice has been the result of a long and fearful struggle in the history of the world, or has, in its establishment, constituted an *epoch* in the progress of society; making a marked distinction between society as it was *before*, and as it is *afterwards*. So it was with the establishment of trial by jury in the time of Alfred; with the rights secured by the barons in the Magna Charta; in the writ of *habeas corpus* in the time of Charles II.; in the abolition of the Star Chamber; in the arrangements by which an *indictment* shall be found by a jury before trial; in the points established after so long a conflict, that the accused shall meet his accuser face to face, and that the witnesses shall be examined in open court; in the independence of the judges, and in the forms of pleading. The progress of society has been marked by the establishment of these and similar arrangements from age to age; and there is not one of the arrangements now seen in a court of justice which has not in its introduction constituted an epoch in the progress of the world, and been the result of a severe and protracted struggle against oppression and wrong.

It is of the highest importance to the interests of a community that the arrangements which have been

found necessary in the administration of law should be sacredly observed; and yet all are practically set aside in every case of pardon,—for in every such case an interference is allowed which is protected by none of these safeguards. The interference goes to show that, so far as *this* case is concerned, the respect which it is so desirable to maintain for courts of law is to be set aside. It is, in fact, an arrangement where there is *no* proper respect for law or for the regular administration of law under the safeguards secured in the wisdom of past ages.

Such are some of the difficulties on the subject of pardon; difficulties which occur inevitably if pardon is *never* exercised, if it is *often* exercised, or if it should be *always* extended to the guilty. These difficulties it has never been in the power of any human wisdom to overcome; and, whichever of these courses has been adopted, evil has always resulted under every form of human administration. No way has been discovered of so *adjusting* these points as to make the exercise free from difficulty. There has been some defect in the practical working of every system; something wanting which it has never been in the power of a human legislator to introduce into his scheme. There has been everywhere a deep conviction that pardon *should* in certain cases be extended to the guilty; but *how* it can be done so as to secure the interests of justice, so as to maintain the power of law, and so as not to be an encouragement for the commission of crime, is a point which has never been settled in any human administration.

CHAPTER III.

EMBARRASSMENTS IN A HUMAN GOVERNMENT FROM
THE WANT OF AN ATONEMENT.

ALL governments, in the administration of the laws, experience such difficulties as are proposed to be remedied by an atonement. Whether those difficulties would be removed *by* such a device as that of the atonement is a fair question for consideration; but it will be admitted, on the slightest consideration of the subject, that the difficulties which are proposed to be remedied by an atonement actually exist in all forms of human administration, and that, in spite of any arrangement which can be made by human wisdom, they create constant embarrassment.

It is important, in order to prepare the way for the consideration of the doctrine of the atonement, to show what those difficulties are, and what devices have been resorted to in order to remove them.

I. The embarrassments which are felt may be specified under four heads:—

1. The first arises from the difficulty in respect to the magistrate, the impossibility of his cherishing and carrying out as a magistrate the feelings which he is permitted and required to cherish as a man. As a man, in his private transactions, he can fully

carry out the promptings of humanity and the principle of religion in forgiving an offence; as a magistrate, appointed to administer and execute the laws, these feelings are never to be indulged. There springs up a conflict between the promptings of his nature and the demands of duty; and one or the other of these must be suppressed if he extends pardon to the guilty. The difficulty consists in making the private virtues of the *man* harmonize with the duties of the *magistrate*, for there are feelings of our nature which require us to show mercy to the guilty, and it is universally regarded as a virtue for one who has been offended or wronged to pardon an offender. This is a virtue, however, which the magistrate strives in vain to transfer as a magistrate to his own bosom. Pardon he could freely extend in private life; but his public position creates difficulties in indulging these feelings which he cannot surmount. All the interests of justice would be sacrificed if as a magistrate he should give indulgence to the feelings which constitute the highest traits of character in private life; if he were to indulge in that free exercise of mercy towards offenders which he inculcates as a duty on his own children, and which he feels bound to manifest as a neighbour or a citizen. On the one hand, to be as *unwilling* in private life to forgive as he feels bound to be as a magistrate, would be at variance with all the virtues which are inculcated in regard to the treatment of others, and with what, conscious as we are of imperfection, we are often under the necessity of asking from others; and, on the other hand, to transfer these feelings to a bench of justice, or to expect an officer of justice to indulge

them freely, would be to render all the processes of trial a farce, and to defeat all the purposes of the arraignment of the violators of the law. No arrangement has been devised by human wisdom by which that which is an eminent virtue in private life *can* be transferred to a bench of justice, or by which that which is deemed so essential to virtue in private life can be made proper in him who administers and executes the laws. Every man, therefore, who occupies this position must feel—or must act as if he felt—that he is constrained to assume a different character from that which he deems to be virtuous in private life, when he becomes an executor of the laws, or when he occupies a position where the interests of justice are intrusted to him.

2. The second source of embarrassment occurs in cases where it is desirable that an offender should be pardoned, but where it cannot with propriety be done, and the law is suffered to take its course. In such a case an injury is done to humanity itself, and some of its best dictates are disregarded. There are conflicting feelings and interests, and there is no way by which they can be reconciled. The convictions of the necessity of justice in the execution of the laws, and the strong promptings of humanity in the bosom of the magistrate and in the feelings of the community, come into collision, and there is no method in which both can be indulged, or in which they can be reconciled. The well-known case of Dr. Dodd, so frequently referred to by writers on this subject, will illustrate this point. He was a clergyman. His character and standing before the act of forgery charged on him had been unim-

peached. In an evil hour he committed an act of forgery, and was sentenced to death. The case at once excited strong sympathy throughout the realm. The offence was undeniable, and he himself did not attempt to deny it. He did not seek, by any dishonest or dishonourable act, to evade the penalty of the law, nor did he even avail himself of an opportunity of escape which had been purposely left open to him. The paper, forged with the name of the Earl of Chesterfield, was purposely left with him when alone, with the expectation and the hope that he would destroy it and thus remove all the means of convicting him. But, by some strange infatuation, or by design, he omitted to do it, and the law pronounced on him the sentence of death. His fair character hitherto, his profession, and the fact that this was his first offence, excited the strong sympathies of the nation. A petition for his pardon, drawn up by Dr. Johnson, and with his name at the head, received at once no less than thirty thousand signatures; and all the warm feelings of the sovereign himself prompted him to clemency. The benevolent feelings of a large part of the British nation would have been gratified with his pardon. But, on the other hand, there was the explicit judgment of the law. There was the aggravated character of the offence,—an offence tending to destroy all confidence in a commercial community. The law regarded the crime as so heinous; so important was it to prevent the commission of the crime in a commercial community; so necessary was it to secure confidence in the transactions between man and man, that it has been said

that up to that time in England no one guilty of that crime had been pardoned. Perhaps, too, his profession operated against him, and it was deemed desirable that by a striking example it should be seen that in *no* circumstances whatever was indulgence to be given to that offence. The law was suffered, therefore, to take its course. The offender died, and the world approved the stern decision of the sovereign.

But the *embarrassment* felt in this case for the want of some device like an atonement is apparent. There was a manifest want of some arrangement by which the benevolent feelings of the nation and of the sovereign could be gratified, and by which at the same time the interests of justice could be secured. On the one hand, there were thousands of pained hearts when the guilty man died; and on the other, there would have been thousands of painful apprehensions about the consequences if he had been suffered to live. An atonement, or some arrangement that would have secured, at the same time, the gratification of the benevolent feelings of the community, the life of the offender, and the interests of justice, would have saved the whole difficulty.

In every such case there is a source of embarrassment in the administration of law which it has never been in the power of human legislation to remove. There are desires of our nature which are not gratified; and in the rigid execution of law, however a magistrate may comply with the promptings of nature in one respect,—that which requires him to administer justice,—there are other promptings of his nature which are not complied with,—those

which impel him to mercy. While obeying the demands of his nature in one respect, he is doing violence to it in another; nor has it ever been possible to make such an arrangement that all the promptings of his nature shall be in harmony.

3. A third source of embarrassment in the administration of justice from the want of some arrangement like an atonement pertains to the *reformation* or the future conduct of an offender. Even supposing that the interests of justice were fully consulted, and that at the same time all the promptings of compassion in our nature were complied with, still, there is a material point for which no arrangement is made, in regard to the future conduct of the offender. If his punishment had secured his reformation, and if there were absolute certainty in regard to his future good conduct, the exercise of mercy would be attended with much fewer embarrassments than it is now. The whole aspect of the case would be changed, and an *approximation* would be made at least towards a removal of the difficulties already suggested. It might be supposed that the ends of justice had been so far accomplished in securing his reformation that the exercise of the pardoning power would not be perilous to the community. A few remarks will make this point clear.

(a.) There is great injustice to a community if an offender is discharged with no evidence of repentance and reformation, and no security that he will be subsequently obedient to the laws. This involves a positive wrong to a community, because it sets aside all the arrangements which have been made by that community to detect and punish the guilty

and to secure itself from the commission of crime, and because it jeopardds the safety of the community by turning upon it a practised offender with no security that he will not repeat his offences. The wrong done to the community, therefore, is to be measured by all the arrangements which have been made to detect and punish offenders, and by all the injury which would result if the offence should be repeated. For the arrangements made in any community for the detection, arrest, trial, conviction, and punishment of offenders are among the most valuable of all the arrangements of governments; they call into requisition more than almost any other arrangement the wisdom of legislators; they are supposed to protect more rights and to furnish more security for the peace of a community than any other arrangements; and they constitute, more than any thing else, the security on which the community relies for the preservation of property, reputation, life, and peace. The wrong also is to be measured by all that is thus done to endanger the future welfare of the community. Every offender discharged from prison without evidence of reformation does much to render property, life, and reputation insecure, and is so far an act of injustice to the community. It is practically an act of wrong to the community as direct as it would be to establish a school for the purpose of training burglars and counterfeiters, instructing them in the arts of fraud and villainy, and sending them out thus trained to prey upon the community. If there could be some arrangement by which the *future* good conduct of those who are pardoned, could be secured, the wrong done to the

community would be indeed much less flagrant; but there could be no higher act of injustice to all the virtuous and peaceable citizens of a commonwealth, and no act that would more certainly endanger all the rights that society seeks to secure, than at once to discharge all the inmates of the penitentiaries of a land with no security for their future good behaviour.

(b.) Yet it has never been possible by prison-discipline so to *secure* the reformation of convicts as to furnish a guarantee for their future good conduct. At this point all the arrangements made for reaching the hearts of convicts, and all the efforts of the friends of prison-discipline for securing the reformation of convicts, fail; and, unless some plan securing such an effect as is contemplated by an atonement in the reformation of the guilty can be devised, must forever fail. The reasons for this opinion are the following:—

1. No certain reliance can be placed on any *professed* reformation of a convict; and this would be especially true if his discharge were made in any way dependent on such a professed reformation. No government has ever supposed that it would be a safe principle to adopt that an offender should always be pardoned on evidence of his repentance and reformation. No evidence could be furnished of such a reformation that would be a safe ground of reliance, for the temptation to hypocrisy and insincerity in such a prospect would be so great that *no* reliance could be placed on any protestations of a purpose of future amendment. Even the most hardened offenders would, in such a case, soon learn the

tears and the language of penitence; and few would they be who would remain in prison if the counterfeited expressions of sorrow for sin and the counterfeited pledges of future amendment would secure a discharge. Even with all the precautions and safeguards introduced into prisons on this point; even where there is no promise, or pledge, or even secret hope of pardon from reformation, it is sad to reflect how few pretended reformations in prison can be relied on; how few are, in fact, sincere and permanent.*

2. There is no certainty that punishment will so secure the certain reformation of the offender as to make it safe to pardon him. The design of punishment will be a subject for future consideration in this essay, as well also the usual effect of punish-

* The following extract from the Journal of Prison-Discipline and Philanthropy, for January, 1857, referring to an actual experiment of this kind in one of our States, may be adduced to illustrate the effect which would be produced in this respect by the hope of obtaining pardon on the manifestation of repentance and reformation:—

“There are certain periods at which this pardoning tribunal holds its session, and these are known to convicts. The officers of the State Penitentiary of this same State assured us, not long since, that if one should visit the prison shortly before the assembling of this court, he might think the convicts were suddenly metamorphosed into the most devout religionists. The Bible is in sudden demand. The most demure expressions of countenance are assumed, and the lamblike deportment of the prisoners would indicate a complete reformation. But let the same visitor be present the day after the court of pardons adjourns, and he would think the convicts had suddenly become demons incarnate. Some are favoured in the dispensation of mercy; but others, vexed, chagrined, and disappointed, seem bent upon avenging what they call their wrongs; and it is a task of many days for an energetic warden to reduce them to tolerable subordination.”

ment considered as a means of securing reformation or guarding against a repetition of an offence. All that it is necessary now to observe is, that such an effect cannot be regarded as so certain as to be a basis of calculation in reference to the future conduct of an offender, or a basis of action in reference to his treatment at present. It cannot be assumed in the administration of law that punishment will always be so efficacious in securing reformation that this may be proceeded upon as certain, or that on the basis of such an expectation it will be proper to make an arrangement by which convicts may be discharged. In all the forms of punishment which have been devised,—whether by fines, imprisonment, scourging, torture, attainder, banishment, or branding,—no method has been found that has been so certainly efficacious in securing reformation that it could be assumed that this would always be the result, or that the professions of reformation under the infliction of such penalties could be so relied on that they might be regarded as a safe basis of action in the treatment of the guilty. Repentance and reformation, in fact, occur very seldom as the result of punishment. Even the *profession* of repentance and reformation is a rare thing. We shall see in our subsequent inquiries that punishment as such has no *tendency* to produce genuine reformation, but that whenever a real reformation occurs in connection with an infliction of the penalty of the law, it is by some *foreign* influence, by something which has been introduced apart from the punishment, and which could never have been secured by the mere infliction of the penalty of the law.

3. Such a power cannot be introduced into an act of pardon as shall secure the future good conduct of the offender. If this *could be done*, it is obvious that it would be safe then to pardon the guilty,—at least, so far as *their* future good conduct is concerned. But this cannot be done. There is no certainty or probability that an act of pardon will so operate on the mind of one who is pardoned as to make his reformation certain; there is no tendency in such an act to make it certain. There are no principles in human nature on which reliance can be placed in securing such a result. We cannot so confide in the gratitude of men, or in their generous impulses, as to feel any assurance that by doing them an act of kindness they will cease to do wrong. However flagrant may have been a crime, however clear the evidence that it was committed, and however it might be supposed that an act of clemency in such a case would appeal to all that is generous and noble in man, yet facts abundantly show that no such act of clemency will so appeal to his sense of gratitude as to secure the future good conduct of the guilty. Nor can there be introduced into the instrument of pardon any such influence as to constitute a ground of security for the future good conduct of an offender. The *presumption* is rather that one who had been punished, in whatever way he may be discharged from punishment, whether by having borne the prescribed penalty of the law, or by an act of clemency, will feel that he has been wronged by the punishment, and will seek an opportunity of avenging himself for the wrong. Facts, in the case of those who are

convicted of crime and who are either punished or pardoned, abundantly sustain this presumption.

4. A fourth source of embarrassment in the administration of justice, which no human arrangement has been sufficient to overcome, is, that it is impossible to secure the exercise of *both* justice and mercy. The one, so far as it is exercised, sets aside the other. It is possible to be severely and sternly just, and it is possible to be tender, compassionate, and merciful; but it has not been found possible to blend the two. We have seen in the previous remarks that in our nature there is a demand for both, and that cases constantly occur where it is desirable that there should be an exercise of both; that is, cases of acknowledged crime where it is desirable that the offence should be punished, and yet cases so peculiar in their nature that it is desirable that there should be an exercise of clemency; cases where all the interests of justice demand that there should be *punishment*, and yet where all the benevolent feelings of our nature would be gratified by an act of *pardon*. One of these only can be gratified by the course which may be pursued in the administration of law; both cannot be. They conflict with each other. The one practically and in effect sets aside the other. As a government leans to the one or the other, it is stern, severe, and harsh, or weak, inefficient, and ineffective. Some of the noblest feelings of our nature are overridden and crushed out by the rigid execution of law; some of the essential claims of justice are set aside by every interposition of mercy. There have been no arrangements in society for blending the two. There are no such arrange-

ments in the ordinary courts of justice; there is no special tribunal where it is supposed that the two can be blended. There are arrangements in abundance for the administration of *justice*, and there are arrangements for the exercise of *mercy*, but there are none for the blending of the two. So far also as the character of one who is intrusted with administering the laws is concerned, in proportion as he is inclined to the one it is always at the expense of the other. He is merciful *or* just, not merciful *and* just. The one attribute constantly neutralizes the other; and, though there are cases in abundance where these attributes are manifested separately, there are none where they are perfectly combined. Though there are humane judges, yet the mere administration of law is always stern and rigid. If mercy is to be shown it is not by the judge as such; it is reserved for some other breast than his, or for his own breast when acting in some other capacity. "The constitution," says Lord Mansfield, when delivering the opinion of the court of King's Bench on the outlawry of Mr. Wilkes, "does not allow reasons of state to influence our judgments. God forbid that it should! The constitution trusts the king with reasons of state and policy; he may stop prosecutions; he may pardon offences; it is his to judge whether the law or the criminal should yield. We have no election. None of us encouraged or approved the commission of either of the crimes of which the defendant is convicted; none of us had any hand in his being prosecuted. We cannot pardon. We are to say what we take the law to be: if we do not speak our real

opinions, we prevaricate with God and our own consciences.”

The departments of justice and mercy have in all constitutional and wise governments been kept distinct; and, however the hearts of judges may be inclined to mercy, and however cordial they may be in commending the guilty to mercy, yet judgment and mercy are so distinct in their character, and are to be dispensed on so different principles, that the law presumes that they cannot both be found united in the same bosom, and that they cannot be safely intrusted to the same individual. As the law has made no arrangement for blending the exercise of the two, so it has never presumed that the same person is qualified to administer both.

Such are some of the embarrassments which occur in a human administration from the want of an atonement. It may be proper, then,—

II. In the second place, in illustration of this point, to refer to some cases which have occurred where this difficulty has been felt, and some of the devices which have been resorted to to meet it.

A case occurred in the life of the prophet Daniel, which will show what has not unfrequently occurred under governments where the law is stern and inflexible. The case was this: Darius, the king, had been instigated by crafty counsellors to promulgate a law that whoever should ask any petition of any god or man for thirty days, except of himself, should be cast into a den of lions. (Daniel vi. 7.) Daniel, as

* Lives of the Chief-Justices of England, by Lord Campbell, vol. ii. p. 354.

was anticipated by those who had proposed the law, (for it had been proposed for the very purpose of securing his fall from power,) was the first offender. The king now saw that by the law so craftily obtained he had involved the first officer of the realm and a man of unsullied character in ruin, unless some way could be devised by which the consequences of the statute could be averted. Thus it is said (verse 14) that "the king was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him." His feelings of friendship for Daniel prompted him to this; his convictions of what was right urged him to it; the sense of the wrong that he had done in yielding to the enactment of a law manifestly designed to ruin an innocent man pressed it upon him. But there were insuperable difficulties in the case. There was the stern and absolute law which he had himself enacted. There was the settled maxim in regard to the laws of the realm that they should not be altered, (verse 8;) the fixed principle that, having been once enacted, they should be allowed to take their course, no matter what consequences might follow. There was the undoubted fact that Daniel had violated the law,—a fact which Daniel himself would not deny, and which could not be called in question. There was the rank of the offender, and the apprehension of the consequences on more humble classes if one so exalted should be pardoned after an open and palpable violation of the law. There was the effect which would follow in regard to the character of the monarch himself, if he should thus practically con-

fess that he had been inveigled into the enactment of a law designed for a crafty purpose, whose consequences and bearing he did not himself foresee. In view of these considerations, all that could be done was to let the law take its course. The most illustrious, the most useful, and the most upright man in the kingdom was thus consigned to a most fearful doom; and nothing but the protecting care of God saved him when human justice was denied him. Now, on the supposition in this case that the law had been as just as it was inexorable, what was needed, and what would have met the whole difficulty, was some device like an atonement,—some arrangement by which the majesty of the law could be asserted and its proper influence secured, while at the same time the desire of the monarch's heart to release the offender could be gratified.

This case may illustrate what substantially occurs always in the administration of law. It is true that all law has a penalty; for if it had not it would be a bugbear. It is true that, so far as the administration of law is concerned, all law is inexorable; for, though a legislature may change or repeal a law, a court is appointed only to administer it, not to set it aside, and, so far as a court is concerned, all laws are as inexorable as "the laws of the Medes and Persians." It is true that in every case where an act of pardon is contemplated it is implied that there has been an undoubted violation of law; for if this is not so the discharge of the man is not an act of *pardon*, but of *justice*. And it is true that though all offenders have not the rank, the character, or the moral worth of Daniel, yet that the mere act of violating a law

gives a man a prominence which he would not otherwise have had; exalts him into a degree of conspicuity to which nothing else might elevate him; and gives him a claim to notice which perhaps nothing else could. And it is true, also, that in numerous cases there are strong appeals made to the humanity, the compassion, the kindness, of those intrusted with the pardoning power; that from the age, the former character, the standing, the ability to be useful, of those who are convicted of crime, the operation of the law, though just, *seems* harsh and severe, and a strong appeal is made to mercy. Such instances strongly remind us of the case of Darius, who "set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him."

The case of Dr. Dodd, before described,* may be again referred to, as another illustration of the embarrassments experienced in the administration of a human government for the want of an atonement. If in that case, as in the case of Daniel, there could have been some device by which, on the one hand, the majesty of the law could have been maintained and the claims of justice asserted, and by which, on the other, the benevolent feelings of the sovereign and of the community could have been gratified, it is easy to see how the evils would have been avoided which were inevitable without it.

Whatever may be thought of the arrangement proposed in the gospel to meet the case of sinful men, it cannot be denied that such an arrangement is

* Pp. 51, 52, 53.

desirable, nor that embarrassments are constantly occurring in human governments for the want of it which there has been hitherto no way to overcome. The fact that there is no atonement under a human administration does not occur because there are no cases where it would be desirable, or because no embarrassments arise from the want of it, but because the legislator can make no such provision. It is above him. Even if the principle were admitted that the sufferings of the innocent might be substituted in place of the penalty with which the law threatens the guilty, there is no one whose sufferings he can substitute in place of the guilty, and the whole arrangement is too elevated and vast for him.

To meet and remove these difficulties, as far as it can be done, governments are often constrained to resort to clumsy, ineffectual, and even cruel, devices. Of these the two principal have been *substitution* and *retaliation*.

(1.) *Substitution*.—This has not often indeed been resorted to, for it has not been easy to find a substitute, nor has it been easy to perceive how substituted suffering could satisfy the demands of the law, or secure the ends of the penalty threatened to the offender himself. We shall see, indeed, in a subsequent part of this Essay, that the principle involved in such a substitution is not unfrequently developed in the actual course of events under the divine administration; but it has not been practicable for a human government to *adopt* the principle and to incorporate it into the regular administration of the laws. A single instance may illustrate the difficulty

of doing this, and may show how clumsy, ineffectual, and impracticable the attempt is when men resort to substituted sufferings to screen the guilty from punishment.

The King of the Locrians made a law that the adulterer should be punished with the loss of both his eyes. His son was the first offender; and the father, to save his son from the infliction of the penalty and yet to secure the honour of the law, determined that he himself would lose one eye and that his son should lose another. But, whatever might be the effect of a single instance of this kind on the offender or on the community, it was still far from meeting the difficulties which occur in the administration of justice, and from removing the embarrassments which, as we have seen, press on all governments. For this was not what the law required; it was not what the case demanded. The penalty was simply *divided*, and yet was such that it was not in fact inflicted at all; for the essential idea in the penalty was that of a total loss of sight,—which occurred to neither the father nor the son. If the father had submitted to the loss of both his eyes, the case would have been more nearly met. But even then it would have lacked an essential thing in all the proper demands for an atonement. It could not be repeated, and the influence of it could be properly applicable only to this one case. Besides, it had necessarily no efficacy in bringing his son to repentance and securing his future good conduct. The threatening of the loss of the other eye, and of total blindness, might indeed have deterred him; but that would be

a new penalty, to operate as any other penalty would, deriving no power from the substituted sufferings of the father in this case. Moreover, even if it had been effectual in this case, it could not be expected to operate in other instances to deter from crime, for, in the very nature of the case, it was limited in its intention and influence to this single instance, and any merit which there might be in it could not be transferred to others. Further, the crime was not *atoned for*. Just as much suffering was supposed to be endured as would have been if the whole penalty had been inflicted on the son; and the effect was simply that *a part* was transferred from the guilty to the innocent. So far as the suffering threatened by the law was concerned, it was *all* inflicted, and in that respect the penalty was completely exhausted. There was no gain of happiness, there was no diminution of suffering, there was no advantage on the whole; for if the exact amount of suffering is to be endured, it is obvious that there is no *gain* secured by the arrangement, and that it is better that it should be endured by the guilty than by the innocent. Besides, as already remarked, the arrangement secured necessarily no change in the offender. It might be *hoped*, indeed, that a son would be affected by seeing a father voluntarily endure such a calamity to save him from the full penalty of the law; but it is obvious that there could be no *security* that it would have this effect on him, and still less that it would have such an effect on others. Indeed, it would not be probable that in regard to the reformation of others it would produce any effect whatever.

It might deter others from crime by the apprehension that, if the sovereign was so determined to execute the law as to divide its penalty between his own son and himself, it might be presumed that in all other cases it would be rigidly enforced; but neither in the case of his son, nor of any other offenders, would there be the slightest security that it would tend to bring them to repentance and to a virtuous life.

(2.) Another device which is resorted to to remove the difficulties which occur in the administration of justice, is that of retaliation. A tragedy of this kind was on the point of being enacted in the American Revolution, which would have made the hearts of hundreds bleed on both sides of the Atlantic. A Captain Huddy—an American officer who commanded a small body of troops in Monmouth county, New Jersey—was taken by the British, and shortly afterwards was hanged on the heights near Middletown. It was a case so aggravated, his character was so fair, and it was regarded as so important that a repetition of such offences should be prevented, that retaliation was resolved on, and it was determined that if the leader of the party was not given up, an officer of the same rank should be selected from the British prisoners in the hands of the Americans, and executed. A large number of British officers were then in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, as prisoners. The selection was to be made by lot. It fell on Captain Asgill, an interesting young man of nineteen years of age; and he was conducted towards the army to expiate the murder of the American officer by his death. He had a mother across the

ocean. She was already borne down with the weight of family afflictions; and now, far from home, her son, having attained an honourable rank in the army, and in the dawn of life, was destined to death,—a species of military sacrifice to atone for the crimes of his country. Circumstances, indeed, not necessary here to be stated, prevented the execution of the purpose, and he was discharged; but the *principle* was fully admitted both by Washington and by Congress, and every arrangement had been made to execute the purpose.* Calmly indeed a brave young man might die even under such circumstances; but it was not like dying on the field with the flag of the enemy folded under his head for a pillow, as Wolfe did, or even dying in defeat voluntarily shedding his blood, like Montgomery on the same plains of Abraham.

But it is not with the spirit with which a brave young man might meet death in such circumstances that we are concerned; it is with the transaction itself considered as a human device to avenge a wrong, to secure the ends of justice, to repair an injury, and to atone for an offence. And here we may notice the following things as illustrating this and all similar methods of retaliation:—

(a.) It was a designed *substitution*,—a substitution of an innocent man in the place of the guilty leader of the band which had perpetrated the crime. It was designed to be in the place of *his* death, and was intended somehow to answer the purpose which *his* death would have answered. The execution of

* Irving's Life of Washington, vol. iv. pp. 394–397.

the leader of the party would have been regarded, so far as the law is concerned, as an *expiation* for the offence, or as a *satisfaction* for the crime. If he had been delivered up and put to death, the laws of war would have had no other claim, nor, according to the usages of war, could there have been any other claim, on the enemy. Not even the friends of the murdered man themselves could have demanded any other reparation for the wrong that had been done to them, and the proposed arrangement—by the execution of an innocent man—was intended to accomplish, as far as it could be done, the ends that would have been secured by the death of the murderer himself. It was, therefore, one of the few cases attempted in human laws of expiating crime by substituted sufferings.

(b.) It was to the young officer himself a palpable wrong, a wrong which no consideration could justify. He had, so far as this was concerned, committed no crime. He had violated no law. He had in no sense been guilty of the murder. Nor can it be inferred that he had bound himself by any contract, express or implied, to serve his country in this manner. He may, indeed, be presumed to have offered himself to die for his country, if such should be his lot, on the field of battle, or even in any hard service that might be required. His talents, his skill, his vigour, his time, his valour, all were, in the proper way, to be at the service of his country. But it cannot be supposed that by entering the army he had ever brought himself under an obligation to undergo a shameful death; to have his name connected with the infamy of the gallows, and to be

hurried by a cold and cruel act to the grave, in the morning of life, in order to expiate the crime of another. Nothing could make this an act of justice to him, or ever prevent its being, in all its aspects and bearings, a palpable wrong. Whatever benefit his country might derive to itself by suffering this; in whatever way it might be made to avenge a wrong or make satisfaction for crime, it could *not* but be to him an act of gross and cruel injustice.

(c.) Such an act of retaliation makes even war itself more barbarous and savage. Besides being a wrong to him who is selected to suffer, for which nothing could compensate, it violates all the laws even of 'honour,' deemed so essential in the prosecution of war. It crushes at once all the gentle and noble feelings of our nature, and inflicts pain and wrong on those who *ought* to be protected. It was not merely the young man who was selected to be the victim who would suffer: the infliction would strike deeper, and would reach those who were in no manner implicated in the war, who were in no sense under the laws of war, and who could by no construction be under obligations to suffer the penalty due to crime. After all, the keenest suffering in the case might not be that endured by the young officer himself, for when he entered the army he perhaps expected to die in the service of his country: it would be the widowed mother in a distant land; the affectionate and tender sister; the maiden affianced to him and who waited for his return with triumph. The chief sorrow from the infliction would be found in the home made desolate; the painful disappointment there; the embittered

remembrance in future years of such a day of calamity. Could all terminate on *him*, or could even his death be remembered in future years as it might have been if he had fallen in battle, the case would be different; but when would the sorrow cease, and what mitigation could there ever be of it, if he was dragged, *as if* he had been a guilty man, to be murdered in cold blood to expiate a crime with which he had no connection, and for whose commission he could in no sense be responsible?

(*d.*) It may be added, that if the matter had been of such a nature that he could have submitted to death voluntarily, and that his sacrifice could have been regarded as an act of generous self-devotion to save another from a death *as* cruel, or *more* cruel, or to save a friend or a foe from danger,—as when one perils his life in endeavouring to deliver another from a watery grave or from flame, or throws himself into pestilential abodes to minister to the sick and dying, and himself falls a victim,—then the case would have been different. The aspect of cruelty, injustice, and severity would then have been wholly removed. It would have assumed the character of all that is noble, elevated, and pure. In such generous self-sacrifice there is every thing to mitigate the sorrows of bereavement; and even the distant widowed mother, the affectionate sister, and the affianced bride would find consolation in such an act. The idea of *voluntariness* would change at once the whole nature of the transaction, and impart consolation in the remembrance of it in the scenes of deepest sorrow. In the one case the act would convey the idea of

every thing generous and noble; in the other, it suggests the idea of all that is cold, repellant, harsh, severe. While the act under consideration would fail, therefore, in atoning for the crime or expiating the offence, it would violate every generous feeling of our nature, and serve to perpetuate, extend, and magnify all that is cruel and savage in the nature of man.

The difficulties which have been now suggested press upon every government in the administration of justice; nor has it been possible ever to remove them. The two objects of mercy and justice have never been blended, and the devices which have been resorted to to secure the two have always been clumsy and ineffectual, and usually severe and unjust. One may easily be secured,—either justice *or* mercy; but frequently one is secured at the expense of the other. Justice may be secured, but mercy cannot be extended at the same time to the guilty. It is *mere justice*—stern, hard, inexorable justice—when a murderer dies on the gallows; it is cold, iron-hearted, and iron-handed *right* when a man is incarcerated for life in a dungeon; it becomes a violation of all the tender sensibilities of our nature, a thing which chills and stuns us, when such a man as the youthful Asgill is selected by lot, and when arrangements are coolly made for his death. Possibly, in such a case, one accustomed to the stern laws of war, or schooled in the mere rules of justice, may discipline the *understanding* so that it does not revolt at it; but he never so disciplines the *heart*. That maintains an unwavering aversion to all such transactions; that never varies in its emotions when such

transactions are contemplated. Its remonstrances may be, indeed, silenced. There may be no clamour, and no expressed disapproval. But it is acquiescence in stern necessity in a case where the heart feels that a wrong is done to all its own sympathies, and that a demand of its nature has been disregarded, for there is in such cases no such clemency, such kindness, such compassion, as the heart demands. In the mere administration of justice, judges are compelled to part with the kindlier feelings of their nature, and to lay aside their sympathies as fathers, as brothers, as men; jurors are compelled to forget that they are endowed with sympathy and that it is part of their nature to forgive offenders; executioners are compelled to forget that he is a man for whom they are rearing the gallows, and to suppress all the tender emotions of the soul when they send a fellow-being to the bar of God. But, on the other hand, it is true, mercy *might* be shown to the guilty. All prisons might be thrown open. All convicts might be pardoned. The murderer, and the pirate, and the traitor might be discharged. But then there are principles of our nature which are violated which are as strong and as proper as the claims of mercy and compassion. There are wrongs committed as real, and violations of our nature as certain, as in the sternest and coldest infliction of the mere penalty of the law. In doing this, all the demands of justice would be disregarded, and an egregious wrong would be done to a community. It would be of no use that a vigilant police had ferreted out those who had committed crime; that the process of arraignment and trial had been gone through with; that justice had poised her

scales with sure hand and sentenced the guilty man to death. All the securities supposed to be important to the community in the trial by jury, and in the processes of trial, would be of no value; for they would be all at once set aside. In such a state of things, also, the best interests of the community would be disregarded. Pardoned, but unreformed, the murderer, the burglar, the pirate, the highwayman, the midnight assassin, would be let loose upon the community; and who could lie calmly on his pillow? Every neighbourhood would be filled with discharged convicts unreformed; and where would property and life be safe? Every sea would swarm with pirates; and what security could there be for the vast treasures embarked in the pursuits of commerce? What mother could sleep calmly at night, feeling that her 'sailor-boy' was safe on the ocean?

But if an atonement could be made; if there could be such an arrangement that *all* these varied interests could be secured, what a change would be produced in the administration of the laws! If it were *possible* to institute an arrangement which would secure a proper expression of the majesty and honour of the law and the interests of justice, and, at the same time, make it proper to indulge the benevolent feelings of the heart; that would send forth all who are pardoned, however guilty they may have been, thoroughly reformed, prepared to take their places in the community as industrious and honest men, securing their good behaviour in all time to come, it is obvious that an object would be accomplished which never has been secured in the administration of justice. It would be an object for which the world

has sighed, and which men have endeavoured to secure by the harsh and clumsy devices occasionally resorted to in the vain endeavour to blend the administration of justice and the dispensation of mercy. Whether that object has been secured in the atonement made by the Redeemer, is the most momentous question that can come before the mind of man.

CHAPTER IV.

THE OBJECTS TO BE SECURED BY AN ATONEMENT.

It is now a very material inquiry, What objects are contemplated by an atonement? What is to be secured by it? What is the purpose for which it is to be introduced into an administration of government?

It is clear, from the foregoing remarks, and from the nature of the case, that an atonement must relate to one or all of the following things:—to the law itself, that its authority may be maintained; to the penalty of the law, that the object contemplated by the penalty may be secured; to the offenders in whose behalf it is made, or who are to receive the avails of it, that it may make their reformation and future good conduct certain; to the community, that it may have nothing to apprehend if the guilty are pardoned; and to the character of the lawgiver, that that character may stand fair before the world, and be such as to inspire confidence, if the just penalty of the law is remitted.

These objects would manifestly comprise all that could be effected, or that it would be desirable to effect, in administering the law; and I propose now

to show why such objects must be contemplated by an atonement, or why it is proper to demand that they shall be secured if an atonement is made. In other words, it is necessary to show that if it is proposed to release the guilty on the ground of an atonement, justice may demand, and the interests of a community will require, that these objects shall be secured.

I. The first point relates to the law itself, that its authority may be maintained. "Law," says Blackstone, "in its most comprehensive sense, signifies a rule of action, and is applied indiscriminately to all kinds of actions, whether animate or inanimate, rational or irrational. This, then, is the general signification of law, a rule of action dictated by some superior being." "Municipal law is a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power in a state, commanding what is right, and prohibiting what is wrong."*

The following are the usual definitions of law:—

"Lex est ratio summa, quæ jubet quæ sunt utilia et necessaria, et contraria prohibet."—LORD COKE, i. 17.

"Lex est justorum, injustorum distinctio, quiddam æternum in mente Dei existens; recta ratio summi Jovis."—CICERO, *de Legibus*, lib. 1 et 2.

"Lex est regula actuum moralium obligans ad id quod rectum est."—GROT., lib. 1, c. 1.

"Lex est decretum quo superior sibi subditum obligat ad istius prescriptum actiones suas com-

* Com. i. 38, 39, 44.

ponat.”—PUFF., *de Offic. Hom. et Civ. secund. Leg. Nat.* lib. 1, c. 2.

“Law is a rule which an intelligent being setteth down for the framing of actions by.”—HOOKER, *Eccles. Pol.* B. 1.

“Lex est sanctio justa jubens honesta, et prohibens contraria.”—BRACON.

From these well-known definitions and descriptions of law in general, we may make the following remarks in regard to its nature and value as bearing on the subject before us, and as showing why it is necessary to have regard to it in an atonement.

(1.) Law, in reference to moral actions, expresses the sense of the lawgiver as to what is right, and as to the value of right. It is the measure of his estimate of what should be done, and of the limits by which rights are bounded. The promulgation of the law indeed determines nothing on the question *why* the thing that is commanded is right, or *why* the thing which is prohibited is wrong. So far as the promulgation of law is concerned, that may either be (a) because the lawgiver wills it; or (b) because it is right or wrong in the nature of things; or (c) because one course of conduct will promote happiness and the other will lead to misery. Which of these is the proper foundation of the distinction between right and wrong, and therefore the reason why the law is ordained, is a question which has never been so determined as to command the assent of all men; but the difference of opinion on these points does not affect the position just laid down,—that the law expresses the sense of the lawgiver as to right and wrong, and that the law is the measure

of his estimate of what is just. We are always sure when we have a law in any case, that we have in that the estimate of the lawgiver of what is right; we are not certain, and we need not be certain—for that would not affect the main point—whether this estimate is founded on his own will in the case, his will being essentially, and from the nature of the case, a just estimate of what is right; or on the nature of things; or on the foreseen effects of conduct as bearing on the happiness of an individual or on society. We may be certain, however, that in every case of just law there is some reason why the law in that case is what it is; and in reference to the laws of God we are led ultimately to confide in his infinite wisdom and benevolence in founding his laws on true reason, though we may not be able ourselves to perceive what the reason is.*

(2.) The *value* of law, which by the nature of the act of atonement is regarded as so important, is seen everywhere. All things are placed under law. As God made the worlds, and as he has peopled them, and as he has multiplied living forms and physical agencies, nothing is made lawless. There is not, as the universe came from his hand, and as his administration is extended over it, one thing in the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, or the moral kingdom that is placed beyond the control of law or that is not regulated by law. There is not one that is the production of chance, or that is subject to the play of

* On this question I may be permitted to refer to my Essay entitled "Inquiries and Suggestions in regard to the Foundation of Faith in the Word of God," published by Parry & McMillan, Philadelphia, 1859.

chance; there is not one that in its creation, its position, its developments, or its relations, can be resolved into mere contingency. All sciences are founded on the belief that the universe is controlled by laws, and serve only to develop their nature and illustrate their universality and value. There is not a crystal that is not formed in accordance with law; not a vegetable that grows not in accordance with law; not a star in the heavens that is not moved in accordance with fixed and certain laws; not an animal upon the earth, not a fish in the waters, not a bird in the air, that is not subject in its origin, formation, and mode of living to definite laws; not a man or an angel that is not made subject to law. The study of these laws, in reference to the material world, constitutes all that there is in natural philosophy; in the animal world, all that there is in natural history; in the affinities and repellencies of the particles of matter, all that there is in chemistry; in the movements of the heavenly bodies, all that there is in astronomy; in the developments of life, all that there is in physiology; in the soul of man, all that there is in psychology; in the operations of mind, all that there is in moral philosophy; in the study of the divine nature and the unfolding of the divine plans, all that there is in theology. If there were not laws applicable to every thing, there could be no science, no calculations in regard to the future, no basis of confidence in any human effort, no encouragement to plough a field, to construct a vessel, to navigate the ocean, to attempt to restore health when impaired, or to save the soul. All that we see, all that we do, all that we hope for, is based

on the existence of law, and is all an illustration of the value of law. The purpose of an atonement, therefore, clearly, cannot be to set aside law; but it is to be presumed that if an atonement is made it will so far accord with the established course of events as to illustrate its importance and value.

(3.) All these laws are kept within their proper bounds, and each class of laws is appealed to and relied on in the department to which it appertains, and is never resorted to to accomplish the purpose of law in another department. 'God does not govern the stars by the ten commandments;' nor does he control the diamond, the oak, or the lion by the laws by which he controls men and angels. Science has arranged, with a good degree of accuracy, all the works of nature into certain great departments or *kingdoms*,—the material, the vegetable, the animal, and the intellectual or moral kingdoms,—each subject to its own laws according to the nature of the objects to be controlled; and, in the actual administration of the universe, these lines are *never* crossed. The laws of the vegetable kingdom are never made, nor could they be made, to control the action of gravitation, electricity, or the mechanical forces; the laws of instinct are never made to control the formation of the cells in the development of plants, nor could they be; the moral law, the law that governs angels and men, could never be applied to control either the material, the vegetable, or the animal kingdoms. However one may be made tributary to another, the operation of the one never invades the appropriate department of the other. These departments are never crossed, never interfered

with. They constitute distinct sciences, and, except in miracles, their absolute dominion always exists in the departments to which they respectively belong.

An atonement must respect this arrangement, and cannot be designed or allowed to disturb this order. Whether any thing like an *atonement*, or a *compensation*, could occur in respect to the infraction of a physical law, might be a more curious than profitable subject of speculation; but an atonement, in the proper sense of the term, can have respect only to *moral* law.

(4.) Moral law has respect to a higher order of agencies than any connected with mere matter. It supposes the existence of understanding and of will. The objects contemplated by a moral law can be secured neither by the laws which pertain to the material, the vegetable, or the animal kingdoms; for men and angels cannot be controlled by mere physical power or by instincts. The department is higher than either of those; and all the arrangements in that department differ essentially from those which pertain to the other departments of the divine administration. Contemplating the subjects of God's moral kingdom as endowed with intelligence, will, and freedom, the things which are *essential* in that mode of government are two: (a) a rule of conduct prescribed by the supreme authority; and (b) appropriate sanctions, designed to secure obedience and to deter from disobedience. The *force* which is applied in the material world—as, for example, in the planetary worlds—to secure the observance of law, can never be applied here; for it would destroy the

very notion of moral agency. In the control of the planets there are, indeed, *rules* or *laws* to secure their regular motion, but the observance of those laws is secured by mere *power*. Beyond that power there is nothing in the case; and when we contemplate all that beautiful harmony, and all the arrangements for 'self-adjustment,' and all the securities for the permanency and good order of the system, we see nothing in the arrangement but wisdom, nothing in the execution but power. There is nothing of the nature of a sanction or a penalty designed to secure a return to order if a law has been violated; nothing that can operate as a motive to secure such a return or to deter from a future violation of law. The irregularities which would occur if a law should be violated would be indeed an expression of the Creator's sense of the value of law, not, of course, to the material worlds where the law had been departed from, but to moral beings who might observe those irregularities, and they might thus be among the means of illustrating the value of law; but in no sense could they operate to deter from a future violation of law or as a means of securing a return to regularity and order. Laws in a moral government are, however, and must be, appointed for these ends. They express the Creator's sense of the nature and value of right, and they are accompanied with sanctions which are ordained for the purpose of restraining, controlling, and recovering the subjects of those laws. These moral laws are designed in their sphere, as physical laws are in theirs, to control those who are principally the subjects of moral law in all worlds, and as applied to moral agents must have essentially

the same nature and be accompanied with the same sanctions. As the worlds which compose our solar system, and the more remote and magnificent worlds of which even our solar system is a part, are all governed by the same simple laws of gravitation, so it is reasonable to presume that the most lofty spirits before the throne of God, and the inhabitants of far-distant worlds, are controlled by the same moral laws which are designed to bind and control men, and that thus the universe is *one*. The law of gravitation which regulates the fall of a pebble is sufficient to control all the material worlds; the law which requires love to God, and which is sufficient to control the mind of a child, may be all that is necessary to bring into subjection and preserve in their place the loftiest intellects that the Creator has made.

(5.) An atonement must be based on the supposition that there is evil in the violation of law which it is desirable to repair; and, to obtain any correct view of the nature and the design of an atonement, it is necessary to have some just apprehension of the evils of violated law. Unhappily, our earth has furnished most painful illustrations of these evils, and, were there no other world in which this could be seen, a sufficiently full demonstration of it might be found in our own. The history of our race has been little more than an illustration of the effects of violating laws; for all the woes and calamities of earth have arisen from that cause. It is certain that, under the government of a just and holy God, if there were no violation of law there would be no suffering; and it is clear, therefore, that, so far as our world is concerned, all the suffering which has

come upon the race has been but a *measure* of the evils of violated law. Whether this is the only measure of those evils, or whether there may be higher proofs of the evil of a violation of law in other worlds, is a distinct question, not needful now to be considered. All that is necessary now to observe is, that it cannot be doubted, from the history of man, that there *are* evils in the violation of the laws of God. The sufferings endured in our world can be traced indubitably in numberless instances directly to this cause. No small portion of the bodily pain that exists on the earth can be directly traced to it; a great part of the mental suffering among men has indubitably the same origin; the evils that result from intemperance, and the crimes and horrors of war, rapine, piracy, and slavery, grow out of this; the sufferings which come upon the guilty as the avowed punishment of crime have the same source; the wretchedness that follows the excesses of youth is to be traced to the same cause. Even with our limited vision we can see that the observance of the laws of God would have prevented a great portion of the calamities that have come upon men; and from analogy it is not improper to infer, even where we cannot closely follow out the connection, that all the woes of earth have been caused by the infraction of those laws. From any thing that appears, if *all* those woes could be traced up to their real source, it would be found that—remotely it might be, but in fact—*all* the sorrows of earth have had such an origin. If so, then in the history of our own world we have a sufficiently affecting illustration of the evils of violated law.

Now, it is certain that an atonement *must* have a bearing on law in all these respects: in asserting its true nature, in illustrating its value, in checking and arresting the evils of its violation. In other words, it must either tend to maintain law or to repair it, either to show its importance or to prevent the consequences of its infraction. It must meet in the divine administration what has been found, as seen in the previous chapter, to be a *defect* in all human governments: it must secure the maintenance of law while pardon is extended to the guilty; it must exert such an influence that they who are pardoned in virtue of the atonement shall become in their future lives obedient to the law. If it can secure these things, then, so far as the law is concerned, the guilty may be released from the infliction of its penalty and be restored to the favour and friendship of the lawgiver. For, on this supposition, all that the law aims at will have been accomplished, and no evil will result from discharging from punishment those who have been guilty of its violation. Whether an atonement *can* do this, is another question, to be considered hereafter. All that is now affirmed is, that it *must* do this, and that *if* this is done, then, so far as the claims of the law are concerned, an offender may be forgiven.

In no human government, as we have seen, has it been found possible to secure this. If a law has been violated, the only way devised of maintaining its honour is by inflicting the penalty; and when that is done, as has been remarked, justice often drives its decisions over some of the finest feelings of our na-

ture; so far as it is *not* done, or so far as that penalty is remitted by pardon, the strong arm of the law is relaxed, and a proclamation is made that the law may be violated with impunity. The act of pardon, as has been shown, is, for the time, and to the extent to which it operates, a setting aside of the authority of the law.

II. The second point to be secured by an atonement relates to the *penalty* of the law.

(1.) Penalty is "the suffering in person or property which is annexed by law or judicial decision to the commission of a crime, offence, or trespass, as a punishment."—WEBSTER.

Punishment or penalty is evil inflicted by a lawgiver, or under his direction, to show his sense of the value of the law, or of the evil of violating the law. It is the measure of his sense of that value; it is an expression of his conviction of the evil which must necessarily follow from an infraction of the law.

It may be well to dwell for a moment on this definition; for, in order to a correct understanding of the doctrine of the atonement, it is absolutely necessary to obtain a just view of the nature and design of the penalty of the law.

And, first, according to this definition, it is '*evil*;' that is, it is pain, sorrow, suffering, privation, something that shall be felt to be an evil, something to be dreaded. This may pertain to person or property; it may be confinement in a prison, or it may be a fine; it may be scourging, branding, torture, or the pillory; it may be banishment, or it may be death. The essential idea is, that it shall be something that is *felt* to be an evil; some form of suffering or pri-

vation that is an object of dread or apprehension, and something that may be employed, therefore, to deter from the commission of crime. The very design of it is to inflict pain; and consequently, when a fine is so light or so disproportionate to a man's property that he does not feel it, or when a person is made so comfortable in a prison that it will be no object of dread, or when the sentiments of a community are such that he who is condemned to punishment is regarded as a martyr, it ceases to be punishment, and the end of the appointment is defeated. Much as it may grate on our sensibilities, and harsh as punishment in any form seems to many persons to be, and much as we shrink from its infliction, yet the very end of punishment is to inflict pain, suffering, disgrace, and when that, by any arrangements of society, ceases to be the effect of punishment, its whole purpose is defeated, and the penalty of the law becomes a nullity.

Next, it is 'an evil *inflicted*.' It is the result of an appointment; it is brought upon a man by design. It does not come as a matter of casualty; it is not the result of natural laws. It is not because the person who suffers is one of a crowd; it is not that he is affected by some general or universal law; it is not that he suffers in common with others, as when an earthquake rocks a city to its foundations, or the pestilence cuts down the aged and the young, or war spreads its desolations among the peaceable habitations of men: it is '*inflicted*' of design, and inflicted purposely on the person that suffers. The blow is directed at him, and him alone. The arrow is not shot into a crowd: it is aimed at

him; and when he falls he falls by the intention of him who has directed it.

Nothing is more important in estimating the nature and design of punishment than to remember that it is *aimed* at the offender, and that, in its very nature, it is separated essentially from a mere 'providential dispensation,' a random blow or shot, a casualty. The *suffering*, indeed, may be the same; but in one case it occurs under a general law by which the guilty and the innocent are swept away together, in the other it occurs under a special and particular law which aims at the individual, and at him alone.

Further, it is 'evil inflicted *by the lawgiver*, or *under his direction*.' It must be the result of his appointment, or it cannot be regarded as punishment. The falling of a tree on a man cannot be regarded as *punishment* unless it can be proved that this came upon him as the result of the appointment of a lawgiver, and as designed as an expression of his sense of the evil of the course of life which the man was pursuing,—that is, under the general law that men who do certain things may *expect* that trees will fall on them.

Once more, it is 'evil inflicted by a lawgiver, or under his direction, *to show his sense of the value of law, or of the evil of the violation of law*.' That may be expressed in the *words* of a statute; but it is more impressively exhibited in the sufferings which he appoints as the effect of the violation of the law. The evil thus inflicted becomes the *measure* of his sense of the value of the law; and if the amount of evil which attends the infraction of law

is ascertained, we have an infallible mode of estimating his sense of the evil.

In this definition I have purposely left out an idea which is commonly supposed to be connected with the notion of *penalty* or *punishment*,—that it is designed *to reform the offender*. I shall have occasion to show that mere punishment, however it may *check* an offender, has no tendency to *reform* him, and that of itself it never produces that result; and, if this is so, then the reformation of an offender is no part of the proper design of the punishment. That looks at the violation of law as an evil, and is designed to express that fact and that alone. The legislator regards the law as valuable, and its violation as an evil; and he expresses that fact in the appointment and infliction of the penalty consequent on its violation. A man is hanged, not for purposes of reformation, and not to deter others from the commission of the same crime, but as a public expression of the sense which the lawgiver entertains of the guilt of the act of murder. Whatever *incidental* effects, either in reference to the individual who suffers the penalty of the law, or to others, may follow from the infliction of the penalty, the one prime, main thought in the case is that *murder is an evil*, and the execution of the guilty man expresses the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the nature of the evil.

(2.) All law has a penalty. We may conceive, indeed, that a law could be made, or a rule of conduct prescribed, where there was no penalty appointed to express the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the evil of the violation of the law. But such a case, in fact, has never occurred. “It is but lost labour,”

says Blackstone,* “to say, ‘do this, or avoid that,’ unless we also declare, ‘this shall be the consequence of your non-compliance.’ We must, therefore, observe that the main strength and force of a law consists in the penalty annexed to it. Herein is to be found the principal obligation of human laws.”

(a.) As a matter of fact, all laws have penalties. Though a *penalty*, properly speaking, can pertain only to a moral law and have respect to moral agents,—for physical objects and brutes cannot appreciate the evil that comes from the infraction of a law,—yet the violation of any law is followed by certain consequences which may be regarded as an expression of the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the value of the law. A violation of the laws of vegetable growth in a plant is followed by consequences in the stunted form, or sickly aspect, or deformed appearance of a tree which is expressive of the evil of the violation. A violation of the laws of health is followed by consequences in the various forms of disease which are illustrations of the value of the laws of health. So in regard to temperance, chastity, honesty. In all the ‘kingdoms’ of nature—material, vegetable, animal, moral—it would not be possible to find a single instance in which a *law* is violated, whether in the organic structure, the development, or the moral conduct, which will not be followed by consequences that should be regarded as an expression of the sense entertained by the Great Author of all things of the value of law,

* Com. i. 57.

and that may not, in that sense, be regarded as a penalty.

(b.) A law without a penalty would be counsel or advice, but it would cease to convey the notion of law. It might affect us by its being the result of the wisdom of him who appointed it; by leading us to follow it from our confidence in his experience, integrity, sagacity, or ability, but it would not make the impression on us which is always produced by law. It might have come down to us as the result of the observation of other times, but it would not come down to us as law. It might lead us to respect it from being the result of the wisdom of legislation in other ages, from its being found in the laws of the Medes and Persians, or recorded on the twelve tables at Rome, or preserved in the codes and Pandects of Justinian, but it would be no law to us. It might come to us as the result of the imagination or of the profound reasoning of ancient or modern times, found in the 'Republic' of Plato, or in Godwin's Political Justice, or in More's Utopia, but it would not be law to us. Even the Ten Commandments would cease to have the effect of law on us if there were no implied penalty or sanction to express the sense of the lawgiver as to their value and as to the evil of violating them. We *always*, though we may scarcely have thought of it, make a distinction between the laws which are binding on others and those which are binding on us,—between the deductions of reason and the enactments of law; for, though law is the "essence of reason,"* yet to make law

* Lord Coke.

binding it must have proceeded from some appointing power and be accompanied with some proper sanction. We always make a distinction, also, between advice and law; between counsel and command. One has authority, the other has not; one has a penalty, the other has not; one comes to us as the injunction of one who is authorized to require our obedience, the other comes to us as the result of the wisdom of age or experience. And as law without a penalty would fail in securing obedience, so it would equally fail in securing respect. The laws of any nation, wise as they may be, and salutary as would be obedience to them, would become at once a bugbear if all penalty was removed. They would practically bind no one *as laws*, however much they might be respected as advice or as the suggestions of wisdom. For reasons such as these, as a matter of fact, penalties have been connected with all laws, human and divine, and those penalties, in every case, have been nothing more than an expression of the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the value of the law and the evil of a violation of it.

(3.) In reference to the determination of what the penalty of a law must be, the following remarks may be made:—

(a.) In just laws it is not *arbitrary*. That is, it is not mere *will*; for although the will of the lawgiver must determine it, yet that will must itself be founded on equity. It is, indeed, the measure of *his* estimate of the value of the law and of the evils of disobedience, and that is the motive which determines his will in affixing the penalty to the law. If he goes beyond or falls short of that, the penalty of the law

is unjust. If he should affix any thing to the penalty of the law beyond what would be necessary in expressing his sense of the value of the law and the evil of disobedience, it would be so far unjust to the community; and if, in determining the penalty of the law, he should fall short of that, and should appoint any thing which, when fairly interpreted, would not be a just expression of his sense of the value of law and the evil of violating it, it would be so far an act of injustice to himself; for it would convey a false impression of his own estimate of the value of obedience. There may be other ends of a penalty; but it must express the sense which the lawgiver entertains of the value of the law.

(b.) A penalty must be the appointment of the lawgiver. As he appoints the law, so it is his to affix such a penalty to it as shall express his sense of the nature and value of the law. No one else has a right to do this; no one else could so do it as to express the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the value of law.

(c.) The security that a penalty will be just must be found in the character of the lawgiver himself. If there is no such security in his character, there can be none in regard to the equity of the penalty. He has entire control in the matter. No one can require him to appoint a different penalty from what he chooses to do. No one can compel him to change it; and, if he has sufficient power, no one can prevent its infliction. We are, therefore, under the necessity of referring to the character of the lawgiver as the only security that a penalty will be just.

In human governments all the security that can exist on the subject must be in the character of the sovereign, or in the constitutional right to change the government if the penalties of law are excessive. By a change of rulers, by a new constitution, by rebellion or revolution, the severe and unjust penalties of law may be changed, and a milder system may be established; and, as a matter of fact, the penalties of law have been thus modified and made milder as the world advances in civilization.

Of course, there can be no change in the divine administration, for there can be no successful rebellion, no revolution, no progress of civilization, that will affect the penalties of law. There can be no new views, the result of experiment or observation, which will modify the laws of God. All that could ever influence the divine mind in the appointment of a penalty was before that mind when the penalty was appointed; and all the security, therefore, that the penalty will be right is to be found in the character of God himself,—in the fact that God is perfectly just. If there is a doubt on that point, just in proportion to that doubt will there be uncertainty in regard to the justice of that penalty; if it should be that God is *not* perfectly just, then there could be no security that the penalty of his law would be right. To that conclusion, then, we must ultimately come in all our contemplations of the law of God,—that the only certainty which we can have of the justice of that penalty is to be found in his perfect and holy character.

(*d.*) In fact, the penalties of the violation of law are appointed by God. They are not the result of

chance; they are not the effect of natural laws; they are not the appointment of any being inferior to God. There is, for example, a penalty affixed to the violation of the laws of health; and that penalty is the appointment of God. It is so universal that it proves that the same lawgiver presides over the whole race of mankind; it is so uniform that it demonstrates that it is not the result of accident or chance; it has so much of a moral bearing that it shows that it is not the result of any material organization; and it is so far susceptible of being made the basis of moral dealings with the individual himself as to make it plain that it is the appointment of God and is designed to accomplish his own plans and purposes. The same remarks might be made in respect to pride, ambition, selfishness, anger, sensuality, ingratitude. Sooner or later, each and all of these are followed by results which are the proper measure of *his* estimate of their nature.

(4.) The next inquiry is, How is the measure of the penalty for the violation of a law to be ascertained? In other words, in view of the preceding remarks, How shall we know what *God* has appointed as the expression of his sense of the value of the law and the evil of its violation?

In answer to this question, it may be observed that these methods are two: a direct statement on the part of the lawgiver, and a correct observation of the results of conduct.

(a.) A direct statement on the part of the lawgiver, God. If man could look at once at the essence of things and see them as God sees them; if he could look into their very nature and see, by contemplating

the germ, all that would ever be developed from it; if he could place himself at the centre of the universe and by a glance look through all things, then, as God does, he could determine at once what a penalty *ought* to be and what it will be. But this would be to possess a degree of knowledge which can belong only to God; and, unless man has this, it is clear that he cannot determine what a just penalty would be. Nor, unless he has this, can he determine what a penalty *may* be and *ought* to be. That must be, therefore, high presumption in man when he assumes that he can himself determine what a penalty will not be or ought not to be,—or, which is the same thing, when he presumes to decide that an appointed and revealed penalty of law must be unjust. There are many penalties of law under the divine administration in this world which *man* would not, from any point of view which he occupies, have regarded as proper; and, for the same reason, there may be penalties in reference to the world to come which man, from any point of view which he can occupy, would not have himself anticipated, and the reason of which, now that they are appointed, he cannot understand.

To a very great extent the penalties of law are made known by *the direct statement of the lawgiver*. This occurs in most of the laws of men, where the penalty, leaving a certain amount of discretion to the judicial tribunals, is directly specified. Thus, the penalty of murder, piracy, and treason is fixed; thus, within certain limits, the penalty of arson, burglary, larceny, forgery, bigamy, is fixed also. So in the Bible there are clear statements in regard to the consequences of sin,—that is, statements in re-

gard to the value affixed by God to his law and to his sense of the evil of transgression ; statements of what will be the consequence of sin on earth, and its eternal results beyond the grave.

(b.) But it is true, also, that, in reference to a large part of the actions of man, the nature and extent of the penalty for the violation of law is to be ascertained not by statement, but by observation of the consequences of conduct ; *of what, in fact, follows in the line of the offence.* There are many things evidently of the nature of crime, sin, or wrong, to which there is no specific written or promulgated penalty attached, and where the fact that there is a penalty, as well as the true nature of the penalty, can be learned only from the observed effects of conduct. In this case it is to be observed that we ascertain not what is penalty from the mere sequences of events ; we do not infer properly that any one thing is the penalty of a certain action because it follows it directly in respect to *time*,—for the falling of the tower of Siloam was not proof that the eighteen on whom it fell were peculiarly guilty, and the calamities which befall a city in an earthquake or a nation in pestilence are not proof that all those who suffer are universally guilty ; but the things which define the relation of crime and the penalty must be connected as antecedent and consequent ; they must pertain to the same individual,—for one man cannot be punished for the crime of another ; they must be in the line of the offence ; the one must follow so directly and so constantly from the other as to indicate cause and effect ; and the whole must bear such marks of being the appointment of a legislator as to show that the

consequences of conduct in any specified case are an indication of his will or purpose in the matter. In this way we ascertain what are the penalties of intemperance, licentiousness, dishonesty, fraud, anger, gluttony; for they are followed by such consequences as show that God intended to mark them with his displeasure and to restrain men from them by being thus apprized of his displeasure. In these and all similar cases, the consequences which follow from such conduct are the indication, even where there is no revealed statement, of his disapprobation, and are to be regarded as the *measure* of his displeasure.

To observe carefully these consequences of human conduct; to collect, arrange, and record them, has been the great business of writers on moral and national law. The results of such observation constitute, in a great measure, the code of morals by which men are governed in the world. These results are not the *basis* or *foundation* of the distinction of right and wrong, but they are the *indications* of what is right and wrong, and are, in particular cases, the *measure* of the divine estimate. Thus, if we could collect and embody *all* the results of intemperance in any case, those results would be at the same time a demonstration of the fact that God regards intemperance as an evil, and would be the measure by which we are to estimate the evil.

It should be added here that, in all cases, such penalties, as ascertained by observation, would coincide with the statements which would be made on the subject, if any, in a book of professed revelation. If there were a discrepancy between the fact and the statement in such a book, it would prove that the

book could not be from God. If, therefore, the *facts* in regard to the consequences of guilt do not accord with the statements in the Bible, that would prove that the Bible could not be a divine revelation.

(5.) The next remark to be made in regard to the penalty of law is, that the subject for whom the law is made, and in reference to whom the penalty is appointed, may be little qualified to determine what the penalty should be, or fitted to pronounce upon its justice when it is appointed. A child of four years of age may be very little qualified to understand the justice of the penalty which a parent appoints for the violation of his laws, or to appreciate the results which the parent designs to bring out of the infliction of the penalty. The penalty may appear to the child to be altogether disproportionate to the offence, and in a great measure undeserved. For example, he may see, as yet, little, comparatively, of the turpitude of a falsehood, and may not be able to see why such a penalty should be appointed for such an offence as the parent chooses to inflict. A few years may work wonders in regard to that child in enabling him to see the justice of a penalty which may now appear to him so unequal, severe, or harsh, and in a few years he may be in circumstances where he will appoint the same penalty for his own children, —themselves then as much disqualified in turn to understand the reason and the propriety of the penalty as he himself had been.

In respect to this point, the following remarks may be made:—

(*a.*) It is to be presumed, as in the case of the

child above referred to, that the subjects of the law of God may have limited views, and be little qualified to see the reason and propriety of the law itself, much less to see the reason and propriety of the penalty of the law.

(b.) All the subjects of a law are interested in the matter; and therefore it cannot be assumed that they will be impartial in their opinions of the penalty of a law. Men determine what shall be the penalty of the law for *others*, not for *themselves*. Kings thus enact laws; legislators in free governments thus enact laws; parents thus enact laws. All laws are made for others; and this fact goes far in securing equity and impartiality in adjusting as well as administering the penalty. If thieves were to ordain penalties in regard to theft, and murderers to murder, and pirates to piracy, and seducers to seduction, it may be presumed that very slight penalties would be affixed to each of these offences. Nor would it be safe for either of these classes to make laws for the others. We could calculate little on equity if thieves should ordain penalties for murderers, or murderers for pirates, or pirates for seducers, or from a congress of such men in ordaining penalties for any of these crimes. Guilt unfits men to appoint just penalties to law; and indulgence in one form of sin disqualifies, just so far as it exists, a legislator for determining what is due to the violation of the law. Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, Alfred, had eminent qualifications for determining by just legislation what is due to the violation of law. Nero, Tiberius, Caligula, Alexander VI., Cæsar Borgia, Charles II., had none. Of all beings in the universe, therefore, *God* is best

qualified to determine what is due to the violation of law.

(c.) The subjects of a law can see little of the effects of violating law, and are, therefore, little qualified to affix its penalty. Some of the effects may be on the surface and may be apparent to all. Most of the effects are such that they cannot be traced out by the subject himself. A child, as above remarked, can see as yet but little of the effects of a lie; a subject of a civil government may be unable to trace or comprehend all the effects of treason; still less can man, as a subject of the divine government, follow out and comprehend all the effects of the violation of laws of God. Yet it is obvious that, in order to affix a penalty with exact justice to law, it is necessary to take in all those effects and to adjust the penalty exactly to them. Hence it is that, from the limited views which the subject must take, the penalties of law, as we shall see, often appear to be harsh and unjust. They are not, in the mind of the subject, a proper measure of the evil of the violation of the law, and do not determine that evil as *he* sees it. They are the measure of an evil which he cannot as yet comprehend, and as it is measured by the comprehensive mind of the lawgiver himself.

(6.) It follows from all this, as was suggested above, that in many cases—perhaps in most cases—the subject would not have affixed the penalty to the law which has been actually appointed. There are in fact, for example, evils flowing from the sin of intemperance which man would not have been qualified to appreciate, and which he would not have

made the basis beforehand in affixing a penalty for indulgence in intoxicating drinks. *Some* penalty, perhaps, he would have affixed to the violation of law; but it would have been quite different from what has actually been appointed. If we can conceive of a body of men in some now unknown part of the world, assembled together to affix an appropriate penalty to the use of alcoholic liquors, when the art of distillation was first discovered, and if the results which now follow their use had been affixed by express legislation *as* the penalty, the world would have started back with horror, and would have proclaimed such a penalty to be shocking and barbarous. If the poverty and wretchedness which follow from that use, the degradation of the body and the mind, the diseases and disgusting developments on the person, the wreck of health, reputation, and hope, the sorrows, of wives and children, the results in brawls, contentions, and strifes, the agonies of a wretched life—the horrors of mania-a-potu at death—the curse descending on posterity—the apprehension of eternal woe,—if these had been *appointed* by such a body of legislators, the sentimentalists of the world, who now start back so much at the revealed penalty of the divine law, would have pronounced it cruel, horrid, tyrannical. They would have affirmed that nothing in the nature of the case could justify such monstrous legislation. And if man, taking his place as a counsellor and adviser of the Almighty, could have been consulted beforehand, he would have said that such a penalty would be so unjust and horrid that it could never be appointed. If any legislative

body on earth had actually threatened precisely those inflictions which come upon the drunkard, and had had the power to carry out the threatening, the government that had done this would have been regarded by the sentimentalists who now impugn the divine penalties of law as harsh and unjust, as a most severe and savage form of tyranny.

It follows from this that we are very inadequate judges of the penalty which should be affixed to the divine law. It follows, also, that we should not be surprised to find that a penalty has been appointed such as we should not have anticipated, and such as we find it difficult to justify or to explain.

Now, it is obvious that if an atonement is made for sin, it must be of such a nature as to secure the object contemplated by the penalty of the law; that is, it must be such as to show the sense entertained by the Great Legislator of the value of the law, and of the evil of violating the law. As the punishment of the offender himself would have secured this, and as this is the very design of the penalty, if an atonement is contemplated in virtue of which the guilty shall be rescued from the infliction of the penalty, it is clear that the atonement must answer the same end or secure the same result. If it can do this, then no objection could arise from this source to the pardon of the offender, whatever might arise from other sources; if it cannot do this, or if the atonement does not do this, then an act of pardon is, in fact, a setting aside of the penalty of the law altogether, and a public proclamation that that penalty is not to be regarded as an expression of the sense entertained by the legislator of the value of law and

of the evil of disobedience. A friend of the government of God has a right to expect that an arrangement for an atonement will secure this end; an enemy of that government—a skeptic—has a right to *demand* that this provision shall be found in that which professes to be an atonement. If such an arrangement is found in any proposed scheme of salvation, it would be so far an evidence of the divine origin of the scheme,—for it is far above the wisdom of all human schemes; if it is not found in a professed revelation, or if the arrangement would not secure this end, it would be a conclusive argument for rejecting the scheme,—for a scheme originating in infinite wisdom must meet what is so radical a defect in all human governments. It is impossible to believe that God would solemnly appoint a penalty to his law, and then in all his dealings with men act so as to set that penalty aside, or so that the fair interpretation of his acts would be that he regards the law as of no value and the violation of it as no evil.

III. The third point in an atonement relates to the offenders in whose behalf an atonement is made,—that it may make their reformation and future good conduct certain.

We have seen that one of the great difficulties of pardon—a difficulty which none of the arrangements in a human administration has been sufficient to remove—arises from the fact that there can be no *security* of the future good conduct of him who is pardoned, either from professed repentance and reformation, or from the efficacy of the punishment inflicted, or from any influence of the act of pardon

itself on the mind of him who is pardoned. We have seen that one of the principal evils which results from the free exercise of pardon arises from the fact that convicts from prisons are sent out *without* any such evidence of their reformation, to prey again upon the community. We have seen that by no possible arrangement, under a human government, would it be safe to discharge at once all the convicted felons in the penitentiaries in the land.

To render a community secure would be one of the ends of an atonement; and if such an arrangement could be made, it would remove one of the main difficulties in the way of pardon. That arrangement in a human government, if it could be made, would consist essentially in some scheme for securing the reformation and future good conduct of the violators of the law who would thus be discharged.

Not precisely, indeed, for the same reason, but for a reason equally imperative, it is necessary, in a scheme of pardon under the divine administration, to secure the reformation of the guilty, and to obtain a guarantee for their future observance of law. It cannot be supposed that God would discharge the guilty, or release them from the obligation of the penalty of the law, unless there were some ground for believing that they would obey the law in time to come. It is possible that the very stability of the divine administration may depend on this: certainly it would be a reasonable expectation among holy beings that God would not discharge the guilty and demand that they should be received into the 'goodly fellowship' of holy

beings, without some evidence that they were thoroughly reformed. What, we may ask, would the universe be if the legions of fallen spirits now "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness," (Jude 6,) were at once released, and, with all their mature powers and ample experience, suffered to roam over the face of the earth, or to make their way to distant worlds? What would heaven be if the hosts of atheists and scoffers, of murderers and seducers, of the profane, the corrupt, and the sensual, that are now upon the earth, were admitted at once to the blessed abodes of holy beings? What security of happiness could there be in those realms were they suddenly peopled with all the polluted and the defiled of earth?

If, therefore, the guilty are to be released on the basis of an atonement, then there must be some provision by which the reformation and the future good conduct of the guilty will be secured. What that is will be the subject of future inquiry. But it is obvious that it must be something quite different from any arrangement which has been made by human laws. It must be something *in* the atonement itself, or something secured *by* the atonement,—some power or influence to act on the mind of the guilty to bring them to *voluntary* repentance and reformation,—for there can be no other true repentance and reformation; it must be something that shall extend into *all* the future,—embracing eternity itself,—making it certain that the offender who is pardoned will *never* again revolt from God.

IV. The fourth point relates to the community,—that its rights may be secured, and that it may have

nothing to apprehend if the guilty are pardoned. We have seen that one of the difficulties in regard to pardon has respect to the safety of a community. That safety is now protected by the arrangements which have been made for detecting and punishing the guilty. The processes of law are important safeguards in defending the rights and securing the welfare of a community; and each one of those processes, as has been already remarked, constituted, when it was introduced, an epoch in the history of jurisprudence. The rights of person, property, life, reputation, are dependent on the forms of law; on the mode of indictment; on the trial by jury; on the confronting of the accuser and the accused; on the examination of witnesses in open court; on the writ of *habeas corpus*; on the vigilance of the police and the fidelity of public prosecutors in detecting offenders and bringing them to trial.

Yet, as we have seen, all these are practically set aside by an act of pardon. So far as that goes, all that the community has done to guard its own rights, and to secure public peace and safety, is declared to be of no value by each act of pardon. An offender, though arrested and tried by those forms of law which the community has regarded as of so much importance to its own peace and safety, is again discharged, with no security whatever that the same offence will not be repeated; with nothing to protect the community from the murderer or burglar who is thus set at liberty. Nothing can be introduced into the system that shall secure the community from a repetition of the crime for which he was arrested, tried, and sentenced.

Now, what, in this respect, is needed in the case of pardon is some arrangement by which all the interests which it has been the object of the law to secure by the regular processes of trial shall be secured if pardon is extended to the guilty. To make such an atonement admissible as a part of a just administration, there *must be* the same security of person, property, reputation, and life which the community has sought to obtain by these processes of law. The act of pardon must not be capable of an interpretation by which all these, or any of these, would be set aside. There must be, under an atonement, *as much* safety as these processes of law have been designed to obtain; and, if this could be done, there would be no objection, on this account, to the discharge of the guilty; that is, to the pardon of one convicted of crime.

What would thus be requisite in a human government must be equally so in the divine administration. If an atonement is made, it *must* be of such a character that the divine declarations in reference to the evil of sin; that the laws which God has established in the soul itself to show the guilt of transgression, and the arrangements which he has appointed in society to keep up the idea of that guilt; that what he has intended to communicate to man in regard to that guilt by the threatenings of future woe; and that the various influences which he puts forth to detect and punish the guilty here and hereafter, shall not be set aside by that work. There must be the same security on all these points which there would be if they were all carried out and if the guilty were made to illus-

trate the value of these arrangements by enduring themselves the penalty of the law. To all these the work of atonement must have reference; and, if these *can* be secured, the offender may be discharged.

V. The fifth point relates to the character of the lawgiver,—that that character may stand fair before the world, and be such as to inspire confidence, if the penalty of the law is remitted. We have seen that one of the difficulties on the subject of pardon has reference to this point. In a case where it should be contemplated that it was *never* to be extended to the guilty, the character of the sovereign, though it might be *just*, would be severe, harsh, repellent. A government such as that would be would make its way over some of the finest feelings of our nature. It would be a government which might inspire cold respect, but never love or esteem.—In the case where it was supposed that pardon would be *often* extended to the guilty, we have seen that it is impossible so to do it as not to infringe on the arrangements made for securing the regular operation of law.—In a case where pardon should be *always* extended to the guilty, we have seen that the effect would be to encourage crime, and to render every interest in a community insecure. We have seen, also, that in human arrangements it has been found absolutely impossible to *blend* the two attributes of justice and mercy so that they shall be exhibited in proper proportions; so to dispense pardon, or so to administer justice, that the one shall not cast a shadow over the other.

Now, what is needful, if an atonement is made, is,

that there shall be, through that atonement, a proper expression of the character of the lawgiver. It must be required and expected that the atonement shall somehow represent him as a *just* being; as the enemy of transgression; as maintaining the principles of his own law; as confirming all that he has said in that law in regard to its value, and in regard to the evils of its violation. The atonement must make the same representation or impression on this point which the actual infliction of the penalty would do. It would be unjust to the sovereign if it did not; that is, if one representation was made by a revealed law and its threatened penalties, and another by the atonement. In other words, it must be demanded that, for example, the character of God shall not be one thing, as seen in his revealed law and its threatened penalty, and another thing in the atonement; that, in looking at the atonement, we shall not get one impression of the character of God, and another from the threatenings of the law; that in the one God shall not be represented as *just*, and in the other as *unjust*. In like manner, it may be demanded that there shall not be a false impression made by the atonement in regard to the *mercy* of God. If he *is* merciful, then the atonement should so represent his character. It should leave that as a fair impression on the minds of all who contemplate it. There should be *in* that atonement a *real* and not an *imaginary* display of mercy. There should not be a mere transfer of guilt; there should not be a mere infliction of wrath on the innocent instead of the guilty; there should not be mere punishment

and nothing but punishment,—the punishment of the innocent instead of the guilty; there should not be a mere stern demand of the ‘last farthing,’ demanded of the offender or of a substitute; there should be real mercy, real forgiveness, a real *lessening* of the infliction of pain. If this were not so, then, whether a pretended atonement were made or not, the entire representation of the character of God in the case would be that he was only severely and absolutely just, or that there was *no* mercy blended with justice in his character. If God *is* merciful, then this would be a wholly unfair representation of what he is. In one word, it is necessary in the work of an atonement that all the arrangements should be such that the divine character, as far as the atonement goes to illustrate that, should not be susceptible of a misrepresentation, or that it should *fairly* represent that character on these points: (a) That God *is*, in fact, just; (b) that he *is*, at the same time, merciful; (c) that he does not *connive* at sin; (d) that he is not *indifferent* to sin; (e) that he actually intends to *lessen* by the atonement the amount of suffering and of sin in the universe, and does not mean merely to transfer them from the guilty to the innocent. If an atonement can be so made as to furnish in itself a correct representation of the divine character in these respects, it is plain that so far as these points are concerned there can be no difficulty in pardoning offenders. If an atonement could be so made as to furnish a more clear and impressive demonstration than could be made in any other way of what the character of God in these

respects is, there would be this additional reason why it might be introduced into the system.

Whether the atonement proposed in the gospel actually is such as to secure these results will be the main subject of inquiry in the remainder of this Essay.

CHAPTER V.

PROBABILITIES THAT AN ATONEMENT WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, OR GROUNDS OF PRESUMPTION THAT SOME ARRANGEMENT WILL BE MADE TO MEET AND REMOVE THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF PARDON.

IN reference to an atonement for sin, it is quite a material inquiry whether there is any antecedent *presumption* or *probability* that it will be made. That is, Is there any thing in the undoubted natural arrangements which God has made, or in his actual dealings with men, from which it could be inferred, with any degree of probability, that he would at any time interpose, by an extraordinary arrangement, to check evil in our world and to save the race from the consequences of transgression? Or is the idea of checking and removing the consequences of violating law so alien to the whole system of things as to furnish an antecedent improbability that this would ever occur? Is it or is it not a fact that evil is arrested in our world by a divine arrangement that has this for its object? Is there what could properly be regarded as a *system of remedies* for the admitted maladies which have come upon the earth? Does the idea of arresting the con-

sequences of violating law fall in with any of the analogies of nature? Or is the atonement altogether a new device in the actual government of the world?

It may be proper, therefore, to refer to some things in the actual administration of the world which will show that the idea of arresting evil by arrangements which contemplate that end, or which can have had no other design, is an idea which is actually entertained, and which will show, at the same time, that the anticipation of an extraordinary provision for that end on a larger scale is not foreign to the actual course of affairs, and is one which might not improperly be cherished by mankind.

I. In the first place, then, we may refer to a very prevalent idea in the world that such an arrangement is possible, and that it might be expected to occur.

The views of the Jewish people are well known, and will be referred to in another part of this chapter.

There is reason also to believe that an expectation prevailed to a very considerable extent in the pagan world, that something like an atonement for sin would be provided under the divine administration. The belief in the *necessity* of an atonement, and in the fact that an atonement *could be made* for human transgression, was implied in the very notion of bloody sacrifices. There were two classes of offerings to the gods among the heathens. One class was bloodless, consisting of the fruits of the earth, and was designed as a thank-offering, and had, of course, no relation to sin. It was such an offering

as might be made by holy angels, or by man if he had been always perfectly upright. The other was a bloody offering, the offering of the life of the animal. This could never have been designed as a thank-offering or as a mere expression of gratitude, but must have had reference to the fact that man is a sinner, and it must have been supposed that in some way it could constitute an expiation for guilt.

In what way it was supposed that the offering of the life of the animal, or the life of a prisoner taken in war, or the life of a slave, or the life of a child, would make expiation for sin,—for all these were offered in sacrifice,—is a distinct inquiry, which is not necessary here to consider; but of the fact that such a supposition was entertained no one can entertain a doubt. Whether it was believed that such an offering made by human hands would so appease the wrath of the gods by its being regarded as such an acknowledgment of the evil of sin that sin would be forgiven on account of it, or that the suffering of the victim offered in sacrifice would be, in some way, considered as an equivalent for the punishment of the offender himself, may be doubtful; but the fact that those who offered these sacrifices *did* regard the offering as an atonement, and that they, therefore, believed that an atonement was necessary and possible, is as certain as any fact in history.

And yet, while this view is fully confirmed by the fact of bloody offerings, there are also two other aspects in which these sacrifices may be contemplated, bearing more directly on the point before us:—

(a.) One is, that there is reason to suppose that the

custom of offering sacrifice, or of making an expiation by the life of an animal, was originally derived from revelation. In itself there appears to be no reason for supposing that the life of an animal would be an acceptable offering to the gods, or that it could constitute an expiation for sin. It would not seem probable that inflicting pain, or that taking away the life of an innocent animal, would be regarded as any reason why the gods should pardon a sinner and save him from deserved wrath. No such offering is made, or ever has been made, to a civil magistrate as a reason why the penalty of a law should be remitted. No such offering is made by a child to a parent when his law has been violated. No such offering is made by a man to his friend whom he has offended, or to an enemy whose wrath he attempts to turn away. Confession, acknowledgment, tears, might be supposed to have power to influence him who had been offended or wronged; a bribe, it might be supposed, would have power to influence a magistrate; but the idea would never occur that the offering of blood—the slaying of an animal—would have any effect in reference to offences of this class. It has, therefore, been wholly impossible, on any known principles of human conduct, to account for the resort to bloody sacrifices, as intended to appease the wrath of the gods; and the most probable solution is, that they are to be traced to an early divine appointment, and that they have been kept up under the influence of tradition, as meeting some of the demands of human nature when it has been impossible to trace the successive historical steps up to the original appointment.

(b.) The other remark is, that the sacrifices offered by the heathen left just the impression on the minds of those who offered them which we must suppose they would do if they were originally appointed to be an indication to mankind that an atonement *would be made* at some future period of the world. They were never in themselves satisfactory. There was never, for example, any such feeling as the Christian is supposed to have, and does have, when he contemplates the atonement made by the Redeemer, that a 'full, free, and *perfect* oblation had been made for the sins of the world;' that the sacrifice made was so complete that there was no necessity for its being repeated; that it was of such a character that it could not be repeated; that it was so perfect that it did not suppose or contemplate any thing future. The ordinary Jewish sacrifices were repeated every day. The high-priest went into the most holy place every year, on the great day of the atonement, repeating what had been done the year before, as if there was the same need of an atonement still which there had been the year previous. All heathen sacrifices are repeated often, as if there had been as yet no true expiation. The consciences of Jews and heathens never felt satisfied that *the* atonement had yet been offered; and, after all that had been done or that could be done, there was still the feeling which we should suppose there would be on the supposition that the original intention was not that *these* sacrifices should be a proper atonement for sin, but that they were appointed with reference to one that was yet to be made.

They thus served to keep up the impression from

age to age that an atonement *would* be made; and thus they practically directed the mind onward, and prepared the world to give credit to the statements about the true atonement when it should be offered.

The expectation that an atonement *would* be made, thus indicated extensively in the actual belief of the world, must have had some ground or basis. Universal opinions and expectations do not spring up in the mind of man without some foundation either in the nature of things, or in divine predictions, or in the real wants of the race; and, in this case, such an expectation could have been founded only on one of the following things, to wit: Either,

(1.) That the custom of sacrifice was founded on a tradition derived from an original divine appointment which *had* a reference to an atonement to be made in some future period of the world. Or,

(2.) That there was some deep conviction in the human mind—some profound sense of sin and of the justice of God—some sense of the difficulty of pardon without an atonement, and some belief that God would interfere to save the race from the ruin which they had brought on themselves, which led men to express their belief by the repetition of the acts of sacrifice from age to age. Or,

(3.) That there were some observed arrangements for the removal of evil in the world, on a limited scale, which induced man to hope that there would be a wider and more universal arrangement for the removal of the great source of all evil,—sin. Thus, it is conceivable that there might have been such an observation of the methods of repairing physical

evils in the world, as to lead to the belief that the Great Ruler of the earth would not suffer far greater evils to triumph without some corresponding arrangement to check and remove them: some *analogies*, in the course of events, which would be the basis of a general expectation of an atonement.

This leads us, then,—

II. Secondly, to inquire what arrangements there are in the world for the removal of natural or physical evils which might *suggest* the idea of a higher arrangement for the removal of moral evil, or which might, if the idea were once suggested, serve to keep up the expectation of it in the world.

We may refer here (1) to arrangements existing in the very constitution of things for preventing the consequences of our actions; and (2) to arrangements designed to be remedial, or introduced as independent contrivances on the supposition that law would be violated, and that have been engrafted on the original system of things with a view to furnish a remedy for such a violation.

(1.) In regard to the first of these, I cannot better present the subject than in the words of Bishop Butler. “We may observe,” says he,* “somewhat much to the present purpose in the constitution of nature or appointment of Providence; the provision which is made that all the bad natural consequences of men’s actions should not always actually follow; or that such bad consequences as, according to the settled course of things, would inevitably have followed if

* Analogy, Part II., ch. 5, iii.

not prevented, should in certain degrees be prevented. We are apt presumptuously to imagine that the world might have been so constituted as that there would not have been any such thing as misery or evil. On the contrary, we find the Author of nature permits it, but that he has provided reliefs, and in many cases perfect remedies, for it, after some pains and difficulties; reliefs and remedies even for that which is the fruit of our own misconduct, and which, in the course of nature, would have continued and ended in our destruction but for such remedies. And this is an instance both of severity and indulgence in the constitution of nature. Thus, all the bad consequences of a man's trifling upon a precipice might be prevented. And though all were not, yet some of them might, by proper interposition, if not rejected; by another's coming to the rash man's relief, with his own laying hold on that relief in such sort as the case required. Persons may do a great deal themselves towards preventing the bad consequences of their follies; and more may be done by themselves together with the assistance of others their fellow-creatures; which assistance nature requires and prompts us to. This is the general constitution of the world. Now, suppose it had been so constituted that, after such actions were done as were foreseen naturally to draw after them misery to the doer, it should have been no more in human power to have prevented that naturally consequent misery, in any instance, than it is in all: no one can say whether such a severe constitution of things might not yet have been really good. But that, on the contrary, provision is made by nature that we

may and do to so great a degree prevent the bad natural effects of our follies,—this may be called mercy or compassion in the original constitution of the world; compassion as distinguished from goodness in general. And, the whole human constitution and course of things affording us instances of such compassion, it would be according to the analogy of nature to hope that, however ruinous the natural consequences of vice might be, from the general laws of God's government over the universe, yet provision might be made, possibly might have been originally made, for preventing those ruinous consequences from inevitably following; at least, from following universally and in all cases."

This extract contains the general principle in the remarks which I am now making.

(2.) I refer, then,—in illustration of it, and in confirmation of the view here presented, and as showing that men, on close observation and reflection, might have found such arrangements in nature for checking and removing evil as to lead to the expectation that there might be some higher arrangement to meet the calamities of the world on a wider scale,—to the *remedial* systems which are actually found in the world. The systems or arrangements to which I refer are such as presuppose that law will be violated, and that there will be need of such an interposition; or which are introduced *on* that supposition and *for* that end alone. In other words, they are such as have no other purpose to answer, and such as could have had no place in the system, as far as can now be seen, except on the supposition that there *would be*, in the course of things on the earth, evils

to be remedied. They have no other end now; and if all evil should be done away they would cease altogether or become useless.

In illustrating this point, I shall not attempt to inquire whether these remedial arrangements existed in the original constitution of things,—that is, whether they were introduced there on the supposition that they would be needed, and were so adjusted that they would *come up* of themselves when they were required,—or whether they were, so to speak, an *after-thought*, and were introduced to meet an actually existing evil. The point of the remarks which are to be made would not be affected whichever of these views should be taken; though in a world under the government of a Being without change of plan or newness of purpose, it is, in fact, to be supposed that whatever has come up in the way of a remedy, or is yet to come up, is not actually an *after-thought*, but had a place in the original plan and arrangement. There may be an order of *nature*, however, in the arrangements which such a Being may make, though there may be no difference of *time* in the formation of the different parts of the plan.

I shall refer to two classes of arrangements of the kind now referred to, both of a *physical* character, but making it probable that there will be found a system of *moral* remedies analogous to them. They are the following:—(a) Arrangements *outside* of the evil to be remedied and independent of that in which the evil is found,—or what is properly found in the *materia medica* of the world, or in *medicine*; and (b) the *healing* and *restoring* processes of nature, or arrangements connected *with* the evil to be

remedied, and which, so far as this point is concerned, are self-adjusting or self-acting,—found eminently in *surgery*.

(a.) *Medicine*, or the arrangements in the *materia medica* of the world.

1. All the arrangements in medicine presuppose that there will be violations of the laws of health, or that there will be evils springing from the loss of health to be remedied. We can conceive of a world where no such arrangements would exist; and, indeed, we must suppose that there are no such arrangements in unfallen worlds, and will be none in heaven. We cannot suppose that in an unfallen world there can be any thing which corresponds in this respect with the *materia medica* of our globe, or with the things that seem to have been created only on the supposition that there will be fevers and pleurisies and consumptions. But on earth the preparations of that kind abound everywhere. There are numberless things in the mineral and vegetable worlds that have the properties of *healing* as an essential part of their nature,—numberless things which have, in fact, no other use than that which is derived from healing, and which seem to have been made for that with as distinct and original a reference as the eye has been for light, or food for the nourishment of the body. If it had not been supposed in the original creation that there would be diseases to be remedied, it is impossible to believe that these things would have been made with such properties as they now have—for it remains to be demonstrated that *any* thing was made without a distinct design; and, as a general law, in finding out what purpose any

thing is *fitted* to accomplish, we at the same time find out the purpose for which it was originally *designed*.

2. The things which constitute the *materia medica* of the world, or which come properly under the name of *medicine*, are arranged for the purpose of healing. Many of these seem to have no other end, and no other use can be made of them. Whatever they have in their nature to distinguish them from other substances is adapted only to the purpose of healing; and, though it may be true that some of them may have a compound adaptedness, and may be fitted also to subserve other ends than healing, yet it is also true that, so far as the *medical* property in any of these is concerned, and, in many cases, so far as *any* distinguishing property is concerned, that property pertains only to the healing of diseases, and can be applied to no other use. Mercury or quicksilver, for example, *has*, indeed, a compound adaptedness,—for it may be used in the arts as well as in medicine; but this is not true of numberless other things used in the healing art. Senna, rhubarb, Peruvian bark, and numerous other similar things have no other use than healing and can be converted to no other purpose. They cannot be placed on the same level or made to subserve the same ends as rice, maize, wheat, lentils; for they have properties distinct from them, and they cannot be made to subserve the ends which those things are designed to secure. A druggist would starve to death in his shop, though there might be medicines enough there to heal all the diseases in the world. A company of men on a barren island would soon die if there should be no-

thing else sent to them than a cargo of medicines; they would die if their island produced nothing but quicksilver, rhubarb, and Peruvian bark. The fair conclusion from this fact is, that these things were *designed* for the purpose of *healing*; that is, that it was contemplated that there would be diseases demanding a remedy.

3. These remedies lie *outside* of the evil to be remedied. They differ from the arrangement which will be noticed next in order (*b*) in the fact that they are no part of the original organization of that which it was contemplated would need a remedy. It is an independent arrangement,—a separate system,—which could not be itself originated by the disease to be cured; for, whatever may be said about the adaptedness of a broken bone to heal itself, it cannot be said that intermittent or bilious fevers have any tendency to produce the tree on which the bark that is adapted to heal those diseases is found. They constitute an independent arrangement by themselves, and would have an existence—though, as far as appears, a useless existence—even if there were no fevers to be cured.

4. In a great measure these remedies are effectual. It is true that all diseases are not healed, and that there are diseases which ultimately baffle the skill of medicine. It is true, also, that there are diseases for which as yet no specific remedy has been found. But it is also true that it *may* ultimately be ascertained that there is no form of disease to which the human frame is subject for which a remedy has not been provided,—a remedy which might either weaken the force of the disease or wholly remove it. The

remedies for disease are sometimes undiscovered for ages, and, though existing, they are useless,—as the tree producing the Peruvian bark continued to grow from age to age wholly useless to the world until a happy discovery disclosed its value to mankind. In like manner, it may be possible that arrangements exist for healing all the diseases to which the human frame is subject, and that happy discoveries may yet so greatly enlarge the knowledge of these remedies as greatly to alleviate all the maladies to which the race is subject, and perhaps to remove many of them altogether.

5. This arrangement in regard to physical maladies might suggest the possibility, and perhaps the probability, that some correspondent arrangement would be made to meet the moral evils of the world and to check the progress of those evils. It is certainly a very curious fact in itself that an arrangement of the kind just referred to *should* be found in the world; that it should be contemplated, apparently, in the original structure of things, that there would be disease, and that there should be found a separate and wholly independent arrangement for checking, relieving, and removing it. It is an arrangement which could not have been anticipated; for if we should conceive it to be possible that we could have been consulted beforehand on that point, we should have said that it would be wholly impossible that such an arrangement could be found. We should have said at once that the presumption would be that evil would be prevented altogether; that disease would not be suffered to come into the system; that it seems to be so clumsy a device that we

cannot suppose that a perfectly wise being would have adopted it; that no wise man would originate such a system; that it is difficult to reconcile the idea of permitting pleurisies and consumptions to come upon men with any proper notions of benevolence, whatever may be said of the benevolence of the remedy; that the whole scheme is similar to what would occur in the construction of a machine if the inventor should purposely make it so that it would get out of order with a view to show his skill by an independent arrangement in repairing the irregularity and in restoring its regular motions. It must be conceded that we cannot explain the reason why this apparently strange procedure has been suffered to occur, and we may admit that as yet we are not able to see that it *is* the most benevolent arrangement that could have been adopted. But still, the fact remains as a part of a great system found everywhere in nature, and, whatever may have been the reason of it, it is there. Whether the explanation is to be found in the fact that the human frame could not have been so made as not to be liable to decay and disease; or whether, on the whole, higher benevolence is evinced by allowing disease to come in, and showing the high skill evinced as an independent arrangement in the provision for healing disease; or whether the whole arrangement is one that lies beyond our power of comprehension, having some ends to accomplish which we cannot as yet understand, yet the arrangement exists. It pervades the world. It is a part of the system. We see nothing on earth that is exempt from it; and this might lead men to suppose that it

would be found to be a universal arrangement, and would be as applicable to moral as to physical maladies; that is, that there would be found somewhere, to be disclosed in its own time, some independent arrangement for checking or removing the moral maladies—the sins—of the world. An atonement, if it answered this end, would obviously fall in with this anticipation, and would be in accordance with the general system which has allowed disease to come into the world, and which, by a separate and independent arrangement, has sought to check and remove it.

(b.) *Healing Processes.*—I refer not here, as in the former specification, to arrangements *outside* of that which is to be remedied, or to arrangements that seem to constitute a separate and independent system capable of being applied to that which is to be healed, but to arrangements *in the thing itself*,—in its very structure and constitution. These are, indeed, in one respect independent arrangements; for we may easily suppose that bones might have been so made that they would be liable to be broken though no arrangement existed for their knitting together again, or that a tree might be liable to have its bark injured though there were no arrangement for repairing and restoring it. There seems to be nothing in the nature of a bone that would dispose its parts necessarily to come together again if it should be broken; and in this respect the arrangement for healing seems to be quite independent of the purpose of making a bone. In like manner, we can easily imagine that all trees might have been so made that when the bark was injured there would be no arrangement for the forma-

tion of new bark, or that all arteries and veins might have been so made that when tied there would be no tendency in the blood to form for itself a new channel. The arrangement for restoring the part is, in some respects, quite as much a separate system as that of creating Peruvian bark for a specific disease, and the fact that the arrangement *could* be incorporated into the thing itself as a part of the original plan rather increases our admiration of the wisdom and skill evinced,—as if the spring of a watch were so made that there should be a tendency in it to unite again if it should be broken, or as if the wheels of a locomotive were so made that if they were fractured there should be an inwrought tendency to repair themselves. It is evidently, however, a part of the same general system, showing that it was contemplated that there would be fractures to be repaired. The two cases agree in the principle that there would be occasion for some arrangement to meet and repair an anticipated evil; they differ in the fact that in the one case the arrangement is *outside* and *independent*; in the other it is incorporated *with the thing itself*. A self-repairing spring to a watch would illustrate the aspect of the subject now to be considered; the act of a watchmaker repairing a watch—an outside arrangement—would illustrate the point before considered.

It may be proper now to refer to a few cases where the arrangement under consideration is found, or where an arrangement for healing is incorporated *in the thing itself*.

(1.) The case of a tree will furnish one illustration. It is the arrangement for replacing the bark when in-

jured, or for sending out new shoots when its branches are cut off. A tree might have been so made that neither of these things would ever occur; so made that an injury once inflicted would be final. But this is not the plan which has been adopted. The bark, when injured,—unless the injury has gone so far as to cut off the ascent of the sap altogether,—will restore itself. New bark will begin at once to form, the wound will be covered up, the vitality and the strength of the tree will be preserved. Notwithstanding the wound, it may produce as large a luxuriance of foliage, and bear as large an amount of fruit, and live as many years, as though no wound had been inflicted on it. This is an arrangement in itself quite as independent as the creation of medicine to cure diseases; but it has this peculiarity, that, instead of being *outside*, it is incorporated into the very nature of the tree, or is self-acting. So there exists a similar arrangement for throwing out new shoots and limbs when the first growth shall be pruned away. To a certain extent this is found, probably, in all trees; and the provision in the case is invaluable for the purpose of training the tree to a desired form, and even for producing fruit. The arrangement is not, indeed, that the same limb will shoot out again; but it is that others will be formed which will answer the same or a better purpose; which will grow up more densely or more sparsely; which will come out in more desirable places; or which will supply the place of those that are decayed and dying. This arrangement, we may suppose, *might* have been found in restoring the wings of a bird or the limbs of a horse or a man, and there

seems to have been no reason in the nature of things why it should not have been incorporated into the structure of all animals, for something like this is found in some of the lower species of animals, and, so far as we can see, it seems to have been a mere purpose of will, though founded, doubtless, on some good reason why it should not have been extended through all departments of the animal kingdom.

(2.) We may refer to the arrangement for the reunion of a bone when broken. There was nothing in the nature of the case which made it necessary that the fragments of a bone when broken should have a tendency to reunite. A bone would have been complete if this tendency had not existed. We can easily conceive of a bone as having no such property; and it is clear that the arrangement *might* have been such as to show that it was never contemplated that a bone would be broken, or, if broken, that it should forever remain so. The provision for its 'knitting' or uniting is quite a distinct and independent matter,—as much so as the creation of bark to be given in a fever.

It is, too, among the most delicate of all the arrangements in the human system, involving separate and peculiar forms of process for the formation of new bone in a manner quite distinct from that in which the bones are originally formed and are made to increase; a method of secreting bony matter, and of conveying it to the broken part, and of depositing it there, which is in no wise necessary in the idea of the formation of bone. All this shows that it was contemplated in the original creation that a bone *might* be broken, and it might, at least, suggest

the inquiry whether an arrangement may not exist for repairing *moral* evils.*

(3.) As a third illustration of the general principle, we may refer to the case of a broken bone where it would be difficult or impracticable to form bone so that the broken parts could be reunited, and where the object is accomplished by the formation of *cartilage*. Such a case occurs when the knee-pan is broken. The knee-pan is, as Dr. Paley observes, a remarkable part of the human frame, that seems to have been *added* to the original conception. "It appears," says he, "to be supplemental, as it were, to the frame; added, as it should almost seem, afterward; not quite necessary, but very convenient. It is separate from the other bones; that is, it is not connected with any other bones by the common mode of union. It is soft, or hardly formed, in infancy, and produced by an ossification, of the inception or progress of which no account can be given from the structure or exercise of the part."† The knee-pan, though not so liable to fracture as many other of the bones of the human frame, may be broken. And yet it is not easy so to lay it down, so to bandage it, so to confine it, so to compress it together, as to secure a reunion of the broken parts: perhaps, detached as it is from the other bones, it would not be easy to secure the secretions necessary for its 'knitting' consistently with the present arrangement. Possibly, too, if this could be done, it could not be so confined and bandaged as to secure a reunion of

* See Paget's *Surgical Pathology*, pp. 160-174.

† *Natural Theology*, chap. 8, v.

bone without injury to the delicate mechanism of the knee itself. However this may be, it does *not* reunite as the other bones do. But the evil is not left without any remedy. Though the broken fragments of the *bones* will not unite, yet a *cartilage* may be formed between them, which will restore the injured bone to a useful function. This is accordingly done. The case is one that shows that there is a pervading law in the system of things by which a remedy for evils that occur is provided, and it may suggest the probability that somewhere there will be found an arrangement to meet the higher evils that may come into the system.

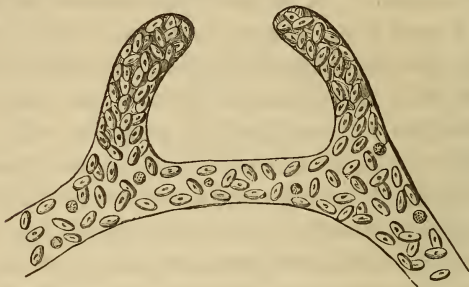
(4.) A similar arrangement occurs in regard to the arteries and veins. It was possible, evidently, so to make the human frame that there would never have been an opportunity for the performance of a surgical operation; that is, so to make it that, on the supposition that an amputation was to be performed, the patient would bleed to death. But, as the results have shown, it was very important that the frame should be constructed on the supposition that amputation might become necessary. And it was equally important, if this should be done, that provision should be made for carrying the blood around the system in some regular mode of circulation, or that its natural flow should not be permanently stopped: in other words, that it should be practicable not only to tie an artery and to prevent bleeding, but that the blood should continue to flow through the artery thus arrested, and be conveyed around again to the lungs and the heart. But this was a delicate, and apparently an impossible, arrangement. Yet it has

been accomplished. By one of the most wonderful contrivances in the human frame, the blood ploughs out for itself a new channel, and thus secures a free circulation. It is not like water that is obstructed, and that makes a way for itself over or through the embankment by mere mechanical force: it is as if in a system of water-pipes laid underground there was a self-acting power *in* the water, by which, if one of the pipes should be injured or cut off, it should plough out a channel in the ground for a pipe, and construct a new pipe, connecting it carefully with the obstructed part, and so laying it down as to connect itself again with the main pipe, and securing—though by a slightly circuitous course—the regular flow of the water. Obviously, there is no human mechanism that can accomplish this; but it *is* accomplished in the human frame, and is one of those wonderful provisions in nature which indicate the existence of remedial systems, and which naturally suggest the inquiry whether some plan may not have been contemplated which would be fitted to remove *all* the evils, physical and moral, which would be likely to come into and disturb the general system.

The process to which I have here referred, by which the blood in the case of amputation forms for itself a new channel and secures the proper circulation, is so interesting, and is such a beautiful exhibition of the Divine wisdom and goodness, that I cannot better illustrate my subject than by copying the description of the process from a well-known book on surgery:—

“The method may be termed an *outgrowth* from the vessels already formed. Suppose a line or arch

of capillary vessels passing below the edge or surface of a part to which new material has been superadded [as in the annexed figure]. The vessel will first



present a dilatation at one point, and coincidently, or shortly after, at another, as if its wall yielded a little near the edge or surface. The slight pouches thus formed gradually extend, as blind canals or diverticula, from the original vessel, still directing their course towards the edge or surface of the new material, and crowded with blood-corpuscles, which are pushed into them from the main stream. Still extending, they converge, they meet; the partition-wall that is at first formed by the meeting ends, clears away, and a perfect arched tube is formed, through which the blood, diverging from the main or former stream and then rejoining it, may be continually propelled.

“In this way, then, are the simplest blood-vessels of granulations and the like outgrowths formed. The plan on which they are arranged is made more complex by the similar outgrowths of branches from adjacent arches, and their mutual anastomoses; but, to all appearance, the whole process is one of

outgrowth and development from vessels already formed. And I beg of you to consider the wonder of such a process: how, in a day, a hundred or more of such loops of fine membranous tube, less than one-thousandth of an inch in diameter, can be upraised,—not by any mere force of pressure, though with all the regularity of the simplest mechanism, but each by a living growth and development as orderly and exact as that which we might trace in the part most essential to the continuance of life. Observe that no force so simple as that of mere extension or assimilation can determine such a result as this; for to achieve the construction of such an arch it must spring with due adjustment from two determined points, and then its flanks must be commensurately raised, and these, as with mutual attraction, must approach and meet exactly in the crown. Nothing could accomplish such a result but force determining the concurrent development of the two outgrowing vessels. We admire the intellect of the engineer who, after years of laborious thought, with all the appliances of weight and measure and appropriate material, can begin, at points wide apart, and force through the solid masses of the earth, a tunnel, and can wall it in secure from external violence and strong to bear some ponderous traffic; and yet he does but grossly and imperfectly imitate the Divine work of living mechanism that is hourly accomplished in the bodies of the least conspicuous objects of creation,—nay, even in the healing of our casual wounds and sores.”*

* Paget's Surgical Pathology, pp. 146, 147.

In connection with these cases, the following general remarks may be made, as bearing on the subject before us:—

(a.) They all proceed on the supposition that there might be violations of law, or that injuries might occur, which it would be desirable to repair. Whether such violations of law would in fact exist, might be another question; but it is clear that in the original arrangement it was contemplated that they might, and that some remedial arrangement would be desirable.

(b.) They *are* remedial in their design. They have no other object. Whether independent arrangements, as in *materia medica*, or whether inwrought in the constitution of things, they are designed for this end alone, and are, in either case, so far an independent arrangement that they are in no way necessary to the original existence of that to which they are adapted, or to its perfect action, if no violation of law were to occur.

(c.) They naturally suggest the idea of repairing moral evils. They bring the question to the mind whether it is not *probable* that the Author of all things, having made such arrangements for repairing the injuries resulting from a violation of the laws of health,—an injured tree, or a broken bone,—would not also make provision for repairing the higher evils that might disturb the moral system. This inquiry has increased force in proportion to the greatness of the evils to be repaired, and to the difficulty of such a higher adjustment; for, from all that we know of the displays of Divine wisdom in creation and providence, does not the fact that it *is* difficult

render it more probable that such an arrangement will be made, since it will furnish a suitable occasion for the display of such wisdom? In other words, is it probable that an arrangement would be made involving so much care and skill for allaying a fever or healing a wound in a tree, or in mending a broken bone, and none be made to save the soul?

The following remarks may, without impropriety, be introduced here as showing how the arrangements for the repairs of injuries in the human frame naturally suggest the question about a higher remedy to meet the evils of sin in the soul of man. They have the more value as a part of my argument from the fact that they are the remarks of a *surgeon*, not of a *professed theologian*:—

“If I may venture on so high a theme, let me suggest that the instances of recovery from disease and injury seem to be only examples of a law yet larger than that within the terms of which they may be comprised; a law wider than the grasp of science; the law that expresses our Creator’s will for the recovery of all lost perfection. To this train of thought we are guided by the remembrance that the healing of the body was ever chosen as the fittest emblem of His work whose true mission was to raise man’s fallen spirit and repair the injuries it had sustained; and that once, the healing power was exerted in a manner purposely so confined as to advance, like that which we can trace, by progressive stages to the complete cure. For there was one upon whom, when the light of heaven first fell, so imperfect was his vision that he saw, confusedly, ‘men, as trees, walking,’ and then, by a second touch of the Divine

Hand, was 'restored, and saw every man clearly.' Thus, guided by the brighter light of revelation, it may be our privilege, while we study the science of our healing art, to gain, by the illustrations of analogy, a clearer insight into the oneness of the plan by which things spiritual and corporeal are directed. Even now we may trace some analogy between the acts of the body and those of man's intellectual and moral nature. As in the development of the germ, so in the history of the human spirit, we may discern a striving after perfection; after a perfection not viewed in any present model, (for the human model was marred almost as soon as it was formed,) but manifested to the enlightened Reason in the 'Express Image' of the 'Father of Spirits.' And so, whenever, through human frailty, amid the violences of the world and the remaining 'infection of our nature,' the spirit loses aught of the perfection to which it was once admitted, still, its implanted power is ever urgent to repair the loss. The same power, derived and still renewed from the same Parent, working by the same appointed means and to the same end, restores the fallen spirit to nearly the same perfection that it had before. Then, not unscarred, yet living,—'fractus sed invictus,'—the spirit yet feels its capacity for a higher life, and passes to its immortal destiny. In that destiny the analogy ends. We may watch the body developing into all its marvellous perfection and marvellous fitness for the purpose of its existence in the world; but, this purpose accomplished, it passes its meridian, and then we trace it through the gradual decays of life and death. But for the human spirit

that has passed the ordeal of this world there is no such end. Emerging from its imprisonment in the body, it soars to the element of its higher life: there, in perpetual youth, its powers expand as the vision of the Infinite unfolds before it; there, in the very presence of its Model, its Parent, and the Spring of all its power, it is 'like him, for it sees him as he is.'**

III. In illustration of the idea that it is *probable* that there would be a Divine interposition in behalf of men for removing the evils that had come into the world, and as perhaps at the same time suggesting the *kind* of interposition which might be anticipated, we may refer to the fact that we are often preserved from evils to which we are exposed, by *the personal sacrifices of others*.

Facts of this kind are so numerous that it is unnecessary to attempt to specify them. The arrangements of society seem constituted much on this principle, that sacrifices are to be made by one portion to ward off impending evils from another, or to procure those blessings which are to be transmitted to other generations. If we look at our enjoyments we shall perhaps be surprised to find how few of them have been obtained directly by our own exertions, and equally surprised to find to how great an extent we are indebted for them to the sacrifices which others have made. I allude to those sacrifices of time, comfort, property, which are made by men not altogether, if they are mainly, for themselves, and to those which, in numerous cases, are made in

* Paget's Surgical Pathology, p. 117.

a great measure, if not entirely, for others. We are saved in infancy and childhood from cold, starvation, and nakedness because there are those who are willing to toil for us and to deny themselves of ease and comfort that we may be happy. We are saved from oppression and slavery because others have been willing to peril their lives in the cause of freedom. Others minister to us in sickness by much personal sacrifice, and in numerous cases we are preserved from death because they are willing to forego ease and comfort in our behalf. The blessings of religion have come to us because, in troublous times, there have been those who were willing to practise self-denial, to forego ease and comfort, to face the terrors of persecution, to give themselves to death, that they might make the gospel known to a perishing world.

A history of the sacrifices and self-denials of the men who have devoted themselves to the cause of patriotism, humanity, and religion would constitute a very considerable part of the history of the world. The most interesting chapters of that history are those which record the deeds of such men as Howard; the facts that most relieve the pained eye in contemplating the general selfishness of the race are the acts of generous self-denial and sacrifice which have occurred. A few of these things have been recorded,—though but few; for men have been much more disposed to rear monuments to perpetuate the fame of the desolators of the world than of its benefactors, and not a few of these generous deeds have occurred in such humble life that they are unnoticed by the historian. Yet they do occur. They are

found in every sick-room, in every hospital, in every prison, almost in every family; in every case where life is perilled to save men from flame and flood; in the self-denials of every missionary of the cross who forsakes the comforts of a civilized land to go among wretched savages, that he may raise them to the dignity and purity of civilized life and make known to them the method by which sinners are saved. Evil would long since have had the entire ascendancy in our world if it had not been for such generous self-sacrifice; and the fact that, with all the depravity of the world, such deeds of self-denial, if collected and recorded, would constitute so material a part of the history of our race, shows that it *may* be a general principle in the Divine administration that evil shall be removed by sacrifices endured in behalf of the wretched and the guilty.

That this *may be* a general principle, and that these facts should be allowed to suggest the idea that there may be a higher intervention of this sort than those which ordinarily pass under the observation of mankind, may be made to appear more probable from the following considerations:—

(a.) There is a fitness for such interventions in the actual condition of things. There *is* guilt, there *is* temptation, there *is* danger, which seem adapted—if not designed—to suggest the idea of such interventions, and to lay the foundation for them. Facts in these respects are such as they would be on the supposition that it was contemplated that there would be occasion for the intervention of self-sacrifice and self-denial.

(b.) Such intervention by self-sacrifice and self-

denial is made *necessary* if these evils are to be removed. There is no other method by which this can be done; and they would not be removed if there were no such interventions. Sickness would terminate in death; nations would be enslaved; the blind, the dumb, the insane, would perish; the heathen would sink to ruin; the *world* would be ignorant, degraded, lost, if it were not for such acts of generous self-sacrifice in the behalf of others. Liberty, intelligence, civilization, and the ordinary comforts of life, are the fruits of such deeds of self-denial in behalf of others; and even now the civilized portions of the earth would sink again to barbarism, degradation, and wretchedness if the spirit which prompted to such acts were not continued in the world.

(c.) Such intervention answers the end contemplated. The evil *is* removed. It is impossible, indeed, now to ascertain what the condition of the world would have been if there had been no such self-sacrifice in the cause of liberty and human rights, of the oppressed and the down-trodden, of the suffering and the sad. Long before this, so far as appears, the liberties of the world might have been trampled out effectually and forever, and the earth might have been wholly under the sway of oppression or made desolate by war; just as, in a somewhat parallel case, the world would have been wholly overrun by wild beasts, reptiles, and monsters if there had been no resistance on the part of man, nothing done to check their growth and triumph.

(d.) This arrangement brings into exercise, if not

into existence itself, a higher virtue than could otherwise have been developed, if it would have existed at all. It is undeniable that some of the loftiest virtues exhibited on the earth are those which are manifested in the benevolence shown to the suffering; in attendance on the sick; in the defence of the rights of man; in the establishment of liberty; in founding and sustaining hospitals and asylums for the insane, the deaf, the blind. Many of the very highest virtues ever exhibited on earth have been developed, if not absolutely created, in this manner. And they are mere virtues. They are acts of pure benevolence. What is done would not have been necessary if there had been no evil to be repaired, no suffering to be alleviated, no wrong to be redressed, no sin to be checked or forgiven. These virtues might have existed, indeed, in the germ,—as all these virtues may be supposed thus to exist in a perfectly holy being—but they could not have been developed; and it is not easy to see how, except to an omniscient being, their existence could have been known. Under the existing arrangement, however, the virtues thus created or developed may be regarded as absolute *gain* in the moral system; that is, there is *just so much more in the system* to be seen and admired, to contribute to the honour of the individual or the good of the whole, and to display the character of God. We cannot, indeed, suppose a watch *to be made to go wrong* in order to show the skill of the watchmaker in correcting the evil; or a tree *to be so made that it would be injured* in order to show the wisdom of the Creator in arranging a healing process; or a limb *to be so made that it would*

be broken in order to show the art and benevolence of surgery in the process of healing; or man *made to be a sufferer* in order to develop the virtues of benevolence in attending on the sick and in founding hospitals; but, on the supposition that a watch *does go wrong*, or that a tree *is injured*, or that a bone *is broken*, or that man *is a sufferer*, we can see how the wisdom and benevolence evinced in repairing the evil become the occasion of originating or developing a new and peculiar order of virtues in the world, and thus the source of a positive *gain* in the cause of virtue. The result may be set down as something absolutely *gained* in the great system of things on the earth; something which but for this could not have been known.

May it not be possible that these principles may have a more general prevalence in the universe, and influence the minds of the dwellers in other worlds? Is it unreasonable to suppose that what we regard as so great a virtue on earth may be found to exist among heavenly beings? And as among those beings there can be no suffering to relieve, no sick-beds to visit, none who are oppressed and down-trodden that need the interposition of others to deliver them, none who are insane, deaf, blind, needing the sympathy and care of others, may we not regard it as probable—or, at least, as not improbable—that the sympathy of those beings may find an opportunity for developing itself by coming to the aid of those of an humbler order—the dwellers on earth—who do need such sympathy? May we not, therefore, suppose that angelic beings might stoop to self-denial and self-sacrifice in behalf of

man? Would it be a departure from this great principle if the feeling of sympathy should be found in a still higher form in the bosom of one related to the Eternal Father as the Son of God is represented to be, and that he should be willing to come to the earth to illustrate the principle on the highest scale possible by making an atonement for the sins of the world?

IV. In illustration of the same point, we may refer to the fact that there have been expectations widely cherished that an atonement would be made for sin; expectations founded on what were regarded as Divine predictions. At this stage of the argument it would not be logical to assume that the predictions in the Old Testament are really of Divine origin; nor, in the view in which I propose to consider them, would it be necessary to assume that they had such an origin; but they may be referred to as showing what, for some reasons, however it may be explained, have been the anticipation, in the mind of man on the subject. We may, therefore, in this view of the case, and at this point in the argument, look at the Hebrew prophets, not as acknowledged prophets, but as men giving utterance to an expectation, laid somehow in the nature of man, that there *would be* in future times such an interposition in behalf of our world as would be implied in the work of the atonement.

The fact here referred to is this: That there existed from time to time in Judea a remarkable class or succession of men, known by the appellation of '*prophets*,' who undoubtedly entertained the belief that an atonement for sin would be made at

some future time, and who proclaimed this as the foundation of an extensive national hope and belief. The peculiarity in the case was, that it was not a single man who did this under the influence of high poetic feeling, as Virgil may have done,* but that these men appeared sometimes in groups and sometimes in succession; that their appearing was not the result of any system of education and was not regulated in any precise order; that they did not always, or even commonly, spring out of the established order of the priesthood; that they had as prophets nothing to do in offering the sacrifices which typified an atonement; that they were of different ranks of society, now springing up in the lowest grades of social life and employment, and now in the most elevated; that their predictions were sometimes in prose and sometimes in song; that they were all men of eminent moral worth,—men who gave evidence that they walked with God,—men who, from some cause, had an insight into the Divine purposes and counsels which was not vouchsafed to the community at large. Besides these traits which characterized them as an order of men, there are three other things to be noticed as bearing on the point before us. (*a.*) The first is, that they all claimed to have been sent from God, and to speak in the name of God. (*b.*) The second is, that they founded their predictions on that fact, and never assumed that they were the utterances of their own genius. (*c.*) The third thing is, that these utterances were undoubtedly

* In the Pollio.

made *before* the appearing of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth, and, consequently, before any claim was set up by his followers that he had died to make an expiation for the sins of men.

The burden of their message, as I shall now show, was, that there would be in some future time a deliverer from sin; that one would come who would be a voluntary sacrifice for the transgressions of the world; that by the sacrifice which he would make he would supersede all the sacrifices which were then appointed to be made; that he would introduce a new economy, under which men would be pardoned, purified, and saved; that by his substituted sufferings, his sorrows and his death, the malady of sin would be healed.

The predictions on this subject may be arranged in two classes: such as express an anticipation in general that a remarkable personage or deliverer would come; and such as describe his work as making a sacrifice or expiation for sin.

Of the former class are such statements as the following. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until *Shiloh* come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. xlix. 10.) "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." (Isa. lix. 20.) "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Haggai ii. 7.) "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall

come, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. iii. 1.) "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord." (Isa. xi. 2.) "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, *unto the Messiah the Prince*, shall be seventy weeks, and threescore and two weeks." Dan. ix. 24, 25.

These passages illustrate the undoubted fact that among the Hebrew people there was a class of men, claiming to be sent from God, who announced that a remarkable personage would appear in some future time, under the general character of a deliverer; and they furnish at the same time a reason for what is as undoubted a fact that this expectation obtained a general prevalence among their countrymen.

The other class of passages pertains more definitely to the point now before us. They are such as served to excite the expectation that that personage would be a sufferer; that his life would be cut off by violence and injustice; and that somehow by his sufferings and death he would lay the foundation for the pardon of sin.

The passages now referred to are such as the following:—"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah *be cut off*, BUT NOT FOR HIMSELF." (Dan. ix. 26.) "In the midst of the week *he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.*" (Dan. ix. 27.) "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, *to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.*" (Dan. ix. 24.)* "And in this mountain [in Jerusalem] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And in this mountain he will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isa. xxv. 6, 7, 8.) "He [the Messiah] is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." "The chastisement of our peace," that is, the chastisement by which our peace is effected, "was upon him." "With his stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "He was cut off out of the land of the living." "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." "When thou shalt

* For an illustration of these passages, and for proof that they refer to the Messiah and to his death as an atoning sacrifice for sin, I may be permitted to refer to my Notes on Daniel *in loc.*

make his soul an offering for sin." "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "He bare the sin of many." Isa. liii. 3-11.*

In reference to these texts of Scripture as bearing on the point before us, two remarks may be made:—

(a.) If they are admitted to be a Divine communication, they settle the point that there *was* a well-founded presumption that an arrangement would be made for an atonement. They show that the prevailing expectation that an atonement would be made was more than a presumption founded on the analogies of nature. They explain how the anticipation sprung up in the human mind, and they justify all the expectations of an atonement that were ever cherished in the world. They serve, too, to explain how it was that sacrifices considered as types were kept up so long and with so much interest in Judea, and how the Hebrew people were cheered with the hope that a period would arrive when the necessity of sacrifices would cease and their painful and expensive offerings would come to an end.

(b.) If they are *not* regarded as a Divine communication, then the fact that they were uttered must be explained in some other way. That such utterances were made, and that they became a permanent record, stimulating the hopes of men and laying the foundation of a widely-cherished expecta-

* For an illustration of these passages, and for proof that they refer to the Messiah and to the atonement, I may be permitted also to refer to my Notes on Isaiah *in loc.*

tion, is an undoubted fact; and the only question, so far as pertains to the point now before us, is, how they are to be accounted for, or what is their origin. If not of Divine origin, they must either have been suggested by some instinctive feeling of the soul, or by some observed analogies of nature, or by some prevailing belief in regard to the character of God, or by some floating fragmentary tradition; and in either case they would illustrate and confirm the position now before us, that there was some ground or reason for supposing that God *would* interpose in behalf of mankind, or that some arrangement *would* be made for removing the evils of sin. All these things combined—the fact that there was a general expectation in the world that a deliverer would come; the fact that there are remedial arrangements for the removal of physical evils; the fact that dangers are often prevented or removed by personal sacrifices; and the fact that there were expectations and announcements, claiming to be of Divine origin, that an atonement would be made—may be regarded as demonstrating the probability that an arrangement would be made to meet the evils of sin and to remove the difficulties in the way of pardon.

CHAPTER VI.

NECESSITY OF AN ATONEMENT.

THE necessity of an atonement is founded on such considerations as have been already referred to in this Essay,—the difficulties in the way of pardon and in the restoration of an offender to favour. We have seen (ch. ii.) what those difficulties are, (1) if pardon is *never* extended to the guilty; (2) if it is *often* extended to the guilty; (3) if it should be *always* extended to the guilty; and (4) in any case by its coming in conflict with the regular administration of justice. We have noticed (ch. iii.) some of the embarrassments to which governments are subjected for the want of an atonement, and some of the devices, clumsy and ineffectual in their character, to which they are compelled to resort in order to escape from those embarrassments. We have considered (ch. iv.) what must be done by an atonement: that it is necessary that it should confirm, and not set aside, law; that it should carry out, and not set aside, the real purpose of the penalty of the law as expressing the sense entertained by the lawgiver of the value of law and the evil of violating it; that it should secure the reformation and future good conduct of him who is pardoned; that it should preserve a community from harm if any

number of offenders should be forgiven; and that it should furnish in its own nature a proper representation of the character of him who has appointed the atonement. And we have seen (ch. v.) that there were antecedent probabilities that such an atonement would be provided in the Divine administration; or that there were such grounds of presumption that some arrangement would be made to remove the evils of sin as to excite an expectation extensively in the minds of men that such an arrangement would be made.

The failure of every thing else to remove the necessary evils of sin and to restore an offender to the Divine favour lays the foundation for the necessity of an atonement. An atonement is *necessary* because there is nothing else that will remove the difficulties in the way of pardon, or because there is no other way by which it can be consistent for God to forgive an offender and to restore him to favour.

It becomes proper, therefore, to inquire why, in this point of view, it is necessary that an atonement should be made; that is, why sinners cannot be saved without it; or why, in the language of the Bible, "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 22.) If there *is any other way* by which the difficulties in the case can be met and sinners saved, then of course an atonement is unnecessary. It is proper, therefore, to inquire on what they who reject an atonement rely for salvation, and to see whether such grounds of reliance furnish security of happiness hereafter. If sinners may rely on the mere mercy of God for salvation, then an atonement is unnecessary. If they can offer sacrifices for their

own sins which would constitute a proper expiation, then there would be no need of a higher sacrifice such as is implied in the idea of the Christian atonement. If they may depend on the efficacy of repentance, and if that is all that is necessary to restore them to the Divine favour, then also an atonement would be unnecessary. If men are punished in this life as much as their offences deserve, and if all that is implied in the penalty of the law is satisfied on earth, or if the same thing should occur in a future world so that they would *exhaust* the penalty of the law and expiate their sins by their own sufferings, then in like manner there would be no need of an atonement. If offenders can claim admission into heaven on the ground that they have—by their own abundant good works, or by the merits of eminent saints made over to them by the power of a priesthood—made amends for the past, then also there would be no need of an atonement. And if it is a principle in the Divine administration that the maladies of the soul may be repaired, as the diseases of the body may be healed, by a recuperative arrangement in the very system itself, then also there would be no need of an atonement.

It is indispensable, therefore, in inquiring into the necessity of an atonement, to examine each of these points; for these are the things on which men who reject the atonement of Christ actually rely; these comprise all the grounds of the hope which they entertain in reference to a future world. Thus Dr. Priestley says, “We are commanded to forgive others, as we ourselves hope to be forgiven; to be merciful as our Father who is in heaven is merciful. But

surely we are not thereby authorized to insist upon any atonement or satisfaction, before we give up our resentments towards an offending penitent brother. Indeed, how could it deserve the name of forgiveness if we did? It is only from the literal interpretation of a few figurative expressions in the Scriptures that this doctrine of the atonement, as well as that of transubstantiation, has been derived; and it is certainly a doctrine highly injurious to God; and if we who are commanded to imitate God should act upon the maxims of it, it would be subversive of the most amiable part of virtue in men. We should be implacable and unmerciful, insisting upon the uttermost farthing.”*

In considering the necessity of an atonement, the question is not what God *could* or *could not* have done if an atonement had not been made. We are not to go back of all the arrangements that are actually made, and to inquire whether the course of things *might* not have been different, or *why* the present arrangement has been adopted. In inquiring, for example, why labour is necessary for the husbandman if he would secure a harvest, or why the law of gravitation is necessary in the physical system of the universe, we are not to ask whether it *might* not have been otherwise,—whether God, for example, might not have provided food by his own direct agency without toil on the part of man, or whether he might not have carried forward the operations of the universe without such a law as that of gravitation. The question relates rather to matters of fact: why, as things are, is labour necessary

* See Beman on the Atonement, pp. 137, 138.

for man if he would have a harvest? or why is such a law as that of universal gravitation necessary in this universe, constructed as it is? There is undoubted force and truth in the following remarks of Bishop Butler. "Certain questions," he says, "have been brought into the subject of redemption, and determined with rashness, and perhaps with equal rashness contrary ways. For instance, whether God *could* have saved the world by other means than the death of Christ, consistently with the general laws of his government. And, had not Christ come into the world, what would have been the future condition of the better sort of men; those just persons over the face of the earth for whom Manasses in his prayer asserts repentance was not appointed. The meaning of the first of these questions is greatly ambiguous; and neither of them can properly be answered without going upon that infinitely absurd supposition, that we know the whole of the case. And perhaps the very inquiry, *what would have followed if God had not done as he has?* may have in it some great impropriety, and ought not to be carried on any further than is necessary to help our partial and inadequate conception of things."

The inquiry on this subject cannot be pursued on the principle of an *à priori* argument. We are not, for we cannot, so go back of the actual arrangement of things in the Divine economy, and attempt to ascertain what God *could* or *could not* have done; we cannot determine beforehand whether it would or would not be proper that such a disposition of affairs should be allowed to exist as would make

an atonement necessary; we cannot argue that, because sin is an infinite evil, therefore an infinite atonement was necessary, or that it was necessary that he who should make the atonement should be infinite in his nature.* But we *may* argue from the existing state of things. We may look upon the fact that man *is* fallen; that sin *has come* into the world; that the law of God *has been* violated; that the penalty of that law *has been* incurred; and that there *are* intrinsic difficulties in the way of pardon. We can look upon the course of events, and see what is the fact in regard to the effect of those things on which men *do* rely as securing salvation, and argue from the failure of those things as to the necessity of some higher mode of intervention. We can ask whether it will be safe for men to reject the atonement and to rely on those things. We can see in the failure of all those things to meet the circumstances of the case—if they do fail—an argument for the necessity of an atonement. In this there can be no presumption; for we are here manifestly pursuing an inquiry of the deepest interest to ourselves, and which lies within the proper range of human investigation.

Such a course of inquiry it is proposed to pursue in this chapter. The necessity of an atonement will be argued from the *failure* of all else on which men are accustomed to rely for salvation; or, in

* In what sense is it true that sin is *infinite*? How is it ascertained that it is infinite? In what part of the Scriptures is it asserted or intimated that the necessity of an atonement rests on the fact that sin is an infinite evil? Where is it affirmed that sin has, in any sense, a character of infinity?

other words, by showing that no reliance can be placed on those things to meet the circumstances of the case, it is proposed to demonstrate the necessity of an atonement.

The question relates to the salvation of sinners; and it is to be assumed in this discussion that men are sinners. Apart from the atonement, the only other methods of salvation by which it could be supposed that sinners could be saved are the following:—The mere mercy of God; repentance and reformation; punishment; repairing the evils of the past by subsequent good conduct; sacrifices offered for sin; and a process of restoration in regard to moral evils—a recuperative process—similar to the healing of diseases in the body.

These methods of salvation it is proposed now to examine. There are no other methods, besides that of reliance on the atonement of Christ. These exhaust the subject. If a sinner may rely on any one of these methods, there is no need of an atonement. If all of these fail, then there must be an atonement, or the sinner must perish.

I. The mere mercy of God.

As this is perhaps the most general ground of reliance for salvation among men, it is important to examine it with care.

It is undoubtedly true that large classes of men—men of all classes and conditions—*profess* to rely on the mercy of God as a safe and sufficient ground of hope in relation to the future world. *The* most general ground of the hope of happiness hereafter is, probably, that which is founded on good works; on an upright character; on honesty and fidelity

in the relations of life; on amiableness, kindness, and courtesy in the intercourse with each other; on the belief entertained by many that they have wronged no one, that they have defrauded no one, that they are just in their dealings with men, that they are faithful in the discharge of their duties as husbands, fathers, neighbours, citizens. But this ground of hope may be laid out of view now; for we are not inquiring whether it would be possible for men to be saved if they were perfectly righteous,—of which there could be no doubt,—but in what way a *sinner* may be saved. The question is, How may one who is conscious that he has violated the law of God obtain his favour again? how may he approach him with the hope of pardon? The first of these grounds of hope is dependence on the mere mercy of God, with no reference to an atonement; and it is undoubtedly true that multitudes do profess to trust to this as a safe resort. The man who is externally moral, and who aims to lead an upright life, and who prides himself on his virtuous character, trusts that the few and unimportant errors of his life may be forgiven; and that he may safely rely, in respect to these, on the mercy of God. The skeptic—the denier of the truth of revelation—also relies on the mercy of God, and thinks that he may safely make it an article of his creed that God is merciful, and that he may in safety trust to that mercy for salvation. The Universalist is loud in his proclamation of the mercy of God, and in the expression of his belief that all men will be saved through that mercy; and even the dissolute, the profane, and the abandoned, when all other hope of salvation fails, take

refuge, on the bed of death, in what they regard as the illimitable compassion of God.

And yet it may be doubted whether any of these persons really rely for salvation on the *mercy* of God. If the moral man, conscious as he may be of a few errors and follies of life, were questioned, he would say that he does not believe that he *deserves* eternal death, and that it would be *wrong* in God to consign him to future woe; and thus he is depending for salvation not on the *mercy* but on the *justice* of God. The skeptic, also, if questioned on the subject, would not allege that he had any communication from heaven to assure him that he might safely trust to the mercy of God,—for all such revelation he on principle rejects; but he would maintain also that it would be *wrong* in God to consign him to an eternal hell, and thus he relies for salvation not on the *mercy* but on the *justice* of God. The Universalist, also, loud as he is in praise of the mercy of God, and stoutly as he maintains that through that mercy all mankind will be saved, yet as loudly and as stoutly maintains that it would be *wrong* in God—that it would be horrible *injustice*—to consign men to everlasting punishment; and thus *he* also relies not on the *mercy* but on the *justice* of God for salvation; and, after all that he says in favour of the mercy of God, he has no belief that there is any occasion for the exercise of mercy in the case, but his system would be practically the same, and his hope would be precisely the same, if God were possessed of no such attribute as that of mercy, but were severely and only *just*. In like manner, also, even the abandoned and profligate sinner would maintain that it

would be *wrong* in the God who made him to doom him to everlasting wretchedness for the sins of this short life; and thus he, at last, also finds refuge and hope not in the *mercy* but in the *justice* of God.

But, if it were true that men really relied on the mercy of God for salvation, would this be a safe ground of hope for a sinner?

In reference to this question, let the following considerations be borne in mind.

(1.) Mercy cannot be safely relied on by an offender in any human administration. We have seen, in a previous chapter, (ch. ii.,) that no government could safely offer unconditional pardon to offenders, and that pardon can in *no* case be administered under a human government without doing much to weaken the strong arm of the law. Mere *mercy* can in no case be made a ground of hope under a human government. When pardon *is* extended to the guilty, it is in most, if not in all, cases, done not on the ground of mere mercy, but on the ground that there was some defect in the process of the trial; or that the sentence of the law was too severe; or that there were some extenuating circumstances in the case; or that there was something in respect to the age, the sex, or the previous character of the offender which made it proper to interpose with executive clemency; or that there was evidence of such a reformation as to make it proper to remit the remainder of the sentence or to commute it; or that there was evidence that the punishment had answered all the ends contemplated by punishment; or that there was some new testimony in favour of the offender which was not before the court on the trial, and

which might have modified the verdict; or that there is reason to suppose that, if all the testimony in the case had been before the court, the accused would have been acquitted: that is, so far as these circumstances bear on the case, the 'pardon' is in fact an act of *justice*, and not of *mercy*.

(2.) It is to be borne in mind, in regard to dependence on the mercy of God for salvation, that there are other attributes in the Divine character than mercy, and that, so far as appears, they are as essential to that character as mercy is, and that it is as important for the good of the universe that they should be displayed as it is that the attribute of mercy should be exhibited. "A God all mercy is a God unjust." There is as certain evidence that God is just as there is that he is merciful. In estimating the character of a neighbour, a merchant, a professional man, a magistrate,—in forming our conception of a perfect *man*,—we think of truth, and purity, and justice, and uprightness, as really as of kindness. We regard these as essential to a perfect character. We have no conception of a character as entitled to high respect and confidence where these are not found. If we could conceive of a case in which there were no traces of these attributes, we should say, however merciful or amiable the man might be, his character was radically deficient. If we could conceive of a case where the attribute of justice is *never* exercised,—where a man in his dealings with others always disregards its claims,—however amiable or kind he might be, we should say that such a character was worthy only of universal detestation.

It is worthy of special remark, as bearing on the

point before us, that, when we say that the attribute of *justice* is essential to our idea of a perfect character, we say at the same time that it is essential to our idea of such a character that the attribute should be *exercised* or *displayed*. It would be of no value as a *dormant* attribute, any more than a dormant attribute of mercy or goodness would be. On suitable occasions, it is as proper that the attribute of *justice* should be displayed as the attribute of *mercy*; and, if there is any evidence furnished by our instinctive sense of what is essential to the character of perfection in God, that *one* of these attributes will be displayed, there is the same evidence, so far as that source of proof is concerned, that the other will be.

It is further to be observed that in all the arrangements among men themselves it is contemplated that there shall be as real a manifestation of the attribute of justice as of mercy. (*a.*) There are more laws made to secure justice between man and man than there are to secure the exercise of mercy from one who is wronged towards him who wrongs him. There are more provisions in the administration of the laws to secure the exercise of justice than of mercy. There are all the arrangements in the courts: the forms of indictment; the pleadings; the trial by jury; the writ of *habeas corpus*; the securities against false imprisonment; the examination of witnesses in open court; the confronting of the witnesses with the accused; the right of appeal: in fact, nearly all the arrangements in the courts of law have reference to the securing of *justice*. Those which have reference to the exercise of *mercy* are comparatively few. There is little legislation in re-

gard to it; and few of the great conflicts in the world have been with reference to the exercise of *mercy*. Those great conflicts which have marked the progress of society have pertained to the exercise of *justice* and not of *mercy*,—have been struggles in securing what is *right*, not what is to be expected as the result of the exercise of *compassion*. (b.) In like manner, it is true that justice is more frequently exercised than mercy. The daily transactions between man and man are transactions of justice. The transactions in courts are those of justice, and not of mercy. The question on trial when a man is arraigned for libel, treason, piracy, or murder, is not a question whether he is a fit subject for executive clemency, but whether he has committed a crime that subjects him to the penalty of the law; not a question whether he shall be pardoned, but whether he shall be punished. The dispensing of pardon is regarded as an event that is to be rare; the dispensation of justice is one that is to be constant. The former is left to an executive, with few rules in regard to its exercise; the latter is guarded with all the skill of legislation, and all the sanctions of law, and all the precautions against abuse and corruption which can be thrown around the tribunals of justice.

(3.) There is abundant evidence that substantially the same order of things is to be found in the Divine administration, and that the attribute of justice is the one that is prominently contemplated there.

(a.) There are abundant indications in the world that there *is* such an attribute in God as *justice*, and that justice will be regarded in his dealings with mankind. This is found not only in the appoint-

ment of *law* to regulate the conduct of men, but in the fact that evils are brought upon the violators of that law *as punishments*, not as expressions of *mercy*. The material thought here is, that such inflictions are an expression of *displeasure* on the part of God, and are designed, according to the proper notion of *penalty*, as has been before explained, to show the sense which the lawgiver entertains of the value of law and of the evil of disobedience; not that they are in their nature *disciplinary*, or merely designed to *reform*. Abundant indications of this are to be found in the Divine dealings; and they are familiar to every one. They occur in the numerous instances in which a certain course of conduct is uniformly followed with certain calamities or evils, or in which the evil has all the marks of being a specific penalty appointed for that particular offence. The evil in the case is such as occurs only on the commission of that offence; and it so uniformly occurs as to show that it is designed to be a penalty *for* that offence. It is not of so general a character that it may be a matter of doubt whether it belongs to *that* offence or some other, or whether it has *any* relation to conduct considered as crime; but it is *as* particular and *as* specific as if there were no other offence to be punished. Thus it is, for example, with the consequences of intemperance,—where there can be no doubt that the calamities which come upon the drunkard are the consequence of his particular habits of life, and are designed to express the sense entertained by the Great Lawgiver of the value of the law which binds men to temperance, and of the evils of a violation of that law. The evils in the

case are of such a nature, and are so uniform, as to leave no room for doubt on the subject. They are evils which follow no other course of life, and they cannot be separated from that habit. It cannot be proved that the radical idea in inflicting these evils is that they shall *reform* the offender; for, as the result shows, they do not *tend* to such an effect. The woe, the sorrow, the poverty, the disease, the dishonour, that attend the career of the drunkard,—the peculiar form of the ultimate effect of the habit,—that form of insanity known as *mania-à-potu*,—all have the appearance, and all seem designed to accomplish the effect, of a specific *penalty*. The things that are essential to the idea of a penalty or an infliction of justice are found in all these effects: (a) They are so specific and peculiar as to show that they are connected with *that* offence as the cause; (b) they are so *uniform* as to show that the whole thing is arranged on plan, and that they do not occur by chance; and (c) it is apparent that they are intended not for purposes of reformation, but as a suitable expression of the *value* of the law in the case, and of the evils of violating that law. They become, therefore, a proof that there *is* such a thing as justice, and that the world is not administered on the mere principle of mercy; that is, that men have much to fear from *justice*, whatever they may or may not have to hope from *mercy*. They are not in a world of mere mercy, but in a world where there are proofs that God is just.

The same remarks might be made of many other courses of conduct. In relation to licentiousness, to gluttony, to fraud, to oppression, to murder, it might

be shown that, sooner or later, all such offences impinge on some arrangement designed to show that there is a law in the case and that that law cannot be violated with impunity; and what is material in the point before us is, that *justice* and not *mercy* is to be expected to follow as the result of such violation of law; that what is to be anticipated is not an expression of *compassion*, but an expression of *displeasure*; not an indication that the offence will be overlooked and forgiven, but that it will be marked and punished.

And we may refer here, in further illustration of this point, to the instinctive feelings of mankind when they are about to commit a crime. What their nature teaches them to anticipate is not forgiveness and impunity, but punishment. They find within them, so far as their minds act at all, not an anticipation of mercy, but of justice. The reproofs and checks of conscience, the dread of the consequences, the fear of death and of the judgment as viewed in connection with the offence, all indicate that there is an arrangement in the human mind to keep up the idea of *justice* in the world; but there is no corresponding arrangement when an offence is committed which has reference to the exercise of mercy,—nothing that points to the exercise of mercy as that arrangement does to the infliction of justice.

In the actual dispensations of Providence, moreover, there are *more* proofs of justice than of mercy; there are more things occurring that can be properly traced to the infliction of penalty, and that should be regarded as proofs that God is just, than there are that can be regarded as proofs that he is merciful.

In other words, there are more specific things that can be directly and certainly traced to the idea that God is *just*, than there are that can be traced to the specific idea of *mercy*. There are, indeed, numerous proofs of goodness, numerous evidences that God is benevolent, and that he desires the happiness of his creatures; but it is to be observed that these, for the most part, are found in the original constitution of things, or in the arrangements made anterior to the commission of crime, and therefore they cannot with propriety be referred to in this argument, for the arrangements which we are seeking for in the inquiry about the mercy of God are not general original arrangements of benevolence, but specific arrangements contemplated as following the violation of law; and the remark which is now made is, that, placing ourselves in that position, or regarding crime as committed, there are in fact more arrangements for the infliction of justice than for the exercise of mercy.

In other words, judging merely from the course of events under the Divine administration, there is more to be dreaded by a sinner than there is to be hoped for; more that should lead a violator of law to fear what is to come than to cherish hope.

(b.) There are in the world numerous instances of what may be called *unfinished* justice, or cases in which, for some cause, the infliction of justice is not complete, but seems to be arrested midway. The death of the individual, or some other cause, arrests the process of justice which was commenced, and whatever may be necessary to complete the process is reserved for another sphere of being. Thus it is

often, for example, in reference to the drunkard. A process of retribution in disease, poverty, disgrace, is *commenced*; and we know what would be the ultimate result if the intemperate man should live for many years,—for we can see that result in numerous other cases. But he is slain in battle, or cut off by the pestilence, or stricken down in a brawl, and the process is arrested *midway* and he is removed to other scenes. So it may be in the remorse that follows the commission of crime; so in the sentence that is pronounced on a murderer, a thief, or a pirate; so in the career of a forger. A sentence is pronounced and *partly* executed, but the offender dies by an ordinary disease; or remorse begins to prey upon the soul with the moral certainty that, if life should be lengthened out, all the future would be embittered, but the guilty man is cut down by some form of disease, or by an act of his own hand is removed to another world, and the process of retribution which had been commenced here is checked midway. It was not a process of *mercy*, but of *justice*. As far as we could trace it, it was the mere infliction of *justice*, with not the slightest intimation that there would be any exercise of mercy.

(c.) There are strong probabilities that these unfinished processes of justice will be carried out and completed in another world. The probabilities are found in such circumstances as the following:—

One is, that it seems to be necessary that it should be so in order that there may be consistency in the Divine dealings. There would evidently be an inconsistency which we could not well reconcile with a character of perfection in arresting a process of

justice in one case, and in another case in carrying it out in full; in removing one to a world where he would, by the mere fact of the removal, escape a large part of the deserved penalty, while another is retained upon the earth that he may meet it in full. It is certainly more probable that the original arrangement will be carried out by the full infliction of the penalty, and that what is *commenced* here and is *unfinished* when the offender dies will be completed in another world. It would be difficult, if not impossible, if this were not so, to vindicate the Divine character.

A second circumstance is, that, so far as we can trace the course of things, there is nothing to justify the expectation that the process of justice commenced in this world and left unfinished by death will not be completed in another world. The process of justice is indeed often arrested; but there are so many cases in which, when that process is arrested, it ultimately, though after long intervals, overtakes the offender, that there is every reason to believe that the process will be completed at some period in the future. Long intervals of time often occur between the commission of a crime and its punishment. Large tracts of land or ocean intervene between the place where an offence was committed and the place where punishment is inflicted. The crime may have been committed in youth, and partially checked or punished then; but the full retribution may come, in some unexpected manner, only in old age. The crime may have been committed in America; and far on in life it may be punished by some calamity that shall come upon the

perpetrator in India or on the ocean. Why shall we not suppose that this arrangement will extend to the future world, and that crime perpetrated in the beginning of our existence here will meet a just retribution there? that sin committed on earth will be punished beyond the grave?

A third circumstance is, that those intervals of life which for a time suspend consciousness—as sleep or delirium—do not arrest the arrangements for the punishment of guilt. There are many crimes unpunished when men lie down to rest at night. There is at the close of each day, just as there is at the close of the lives of individuals, much unfinished justice. Yet neither sleep nor delirium arrests permanently the regular operation of things. The crimes that were committed yesterday and that were unpunished travel over the interval of the night's rest and meet the guilty as they awake to a new day; the consequences of a particular course of conduct will travel even over the delirium of fever, or even a more protracted and permanent insanity, and meet the offender in their consequences in future life on the restoration to health and reason.

Then why should not the same thing occur in regard to death? Why should *that* suspend or annihilate a law which we find to be so universal? Death annihilates nothing. Death may not—probably does not—even suspend consciousness as much as the delirium of a fever, or as is done by a night's sleep. No man can *assume* that death will do what delirium and sleep will not do, or that he may hope for that in the case of death which he may *not* hope for in the delirium of fever or a more enduring insanity.

No man can assume that the arrangements for justice commenced here will not be resumed beyond the grave, and that the processes of justice unfinished here will not be perfected in another world.

(4.) There is no such evidence that men are saved by mere mercy without an atonement as will make it safe to rely on that alone.

The proof on this point is as ample as any proposition can be where there is not a direct declaration from heaven, or where there is not absolute demonstration. For,

(a.) All the cases of *Christians* are to be laid out of view. They profess, indeed, to be saved by the *mercy* of God, and not by *justice*; but it is mercy in each and every case through an atonement, and their only hope of that mercy is that which is founded *on* the atonement.

(b.) There is no other mercy *promised* to men in the Bible than that which is founded on the atonement. There the offer of salvation is ample; but it is limited in the most absolute manner to mercy dispensed through the blood of the Redeemer. It is a great principle, also, in all things, that when God has revealed *one* method of obtaining his favour, or proposed one mode by which it is to be secured, all others are, of course, excluded. That fact is proof not only that it is the *best* mode, but it is proof that there is no other mode; and, whatever we may suppose may have been abstractly true about the *possibility* of any other mode originally, yet the fact that that mode has been selected and revealed to man as the mode in which God is willing to bestow his favours excludes, of course, all other methods, and is at the

same time a demonstration that that is not only the *best*, but that it is the *only* one. The business of man is not to find out what method there might possibly have been of securing the Divine favour, and then to infer that that is now a possible method: it is to find out what God has chosen and prescribed; and that ends the matter. If, therefore, God has said that mercy shall be bestowed through an atonement, that excludes all other methods; and speculation as to what *might* have been becomes vain, if not improper.

(c.) The rejecters of revelation can pretend to no evidence that men are saved by the mere mercy of God. They have no revelation to tell them so; for, on principle, and of design, they deny that any revelation has ever been given to man. No one of their number has come back from the eternal world to assure the living that they who reject the atonement made by the Redeemer are saved by the mere mercy of God. The rejecters of revelation profess to have no means of communicating with the eternal world; they have no means of ascertaining what will be the result of human conduct there; and all their hope in the case *must* be founded on mere conjecture.

(d.) There is no evidence furnished in death that men can be saved, or are saved, by mercy irrespective of the atonement.

The death of all Christians, as before remarked, is to be laid out of view here; and the death of no others furnishes such evidence as the case would demand that they who reject that atonement are saved.

Two reasons may be given why this is so: (1.) one is, that men who profess to rely on the mercy of God for salvation without reference to the atonement, but who, as we have seen above, really rely on the *justice* of God and believe it would be *wrong* in God *not* to save them, are often greatly alarmed when they come to die,—showing that, so far as the evidence in their case goes, this cannot be regarded as a safe ground of trust. The fact that such men are alarmed when they die, and that they then seek for some other ground of hope, is at least *so* common as to show that no one can certainly anticipate that he will himself regard this as a safe ground of reliance when he dies. This fact is such as to vitiate any argument that may be urged in favour of the position that men may *safely* rely on the mere mercy of God without an atonement; for if this *is* a safe ground of reliance for salvation, it ought *never* to give way under any circumstances. In the prospect of passing over such a river as that of death, what we want is not a bridge that *may* break down, but a bridge that never *will* break down and that never does. In the prospect of the storms that may beat around our dwellings, what we want is not a foundation that *may* give way when the ‘rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon the house,’ but such a solid rock that it will *never* give way, however vehemently the storm may beat upon us. Such *is* the rock on which the Christian builds his hopes. It never gives way when he dies; for no true Christian ever doubts the sufficiency of that trust on which he relies, never doubts that if he *is* a Christian he is safe. Can it

be said that no infidel, skeptic, philosopher, ever doubts, when he comes to die, that, if he *is* an infidel, a skeptic, a philosopher, he is safe? (2.) The other consideration is, that, even if it were a matter of fact that they who reject the atonement have no misgiving about the foundation of their hope when they lie down to die, this would not prove that this is a safe ground of reliance. Freedom from alarm and from the dread of death may proceed from other causes than that of safety, or from any well-founded assurance of future happiness. The calmness and peace of the dying skeptic may be accounted for satisfactorily on some other supposition than that he is actually going to heaven, or that he will be saved by the mercy of God without an atonement. In the sternness of the stoic, in the studied and cultivated purpose of the infidel philosopher, in the stupidity which sin engenders, and in the paralyzing influence of disease as men pass away from life, may be found a sufficient explanation of the fact that such men die calmly. If it be said that the same solution might possibly, or with equal reason, be applied to the calm death of the Christian, it may be replied that we do not refer to that calmness in death as the main proof that the soul is safe; for the reliance of the Christian is on what he regards as a *promise* made to men that if they repent and believe the gospel they will be saved. Their hope is based on that. Their calmness in death is not the ground of their hope: it is the fruit or result of a hope founded on the promise of God.

The conclusion which it seems proper to derive from these remarks is, that it is not possible to de-

monstrate from reason, from experience, or from the actual course of events in the world, that men who have violated law will be saved by the mercy of God irrespective of an atonement. It would be probably found, on a just analysis of their own processes of thought on this subject, even by those who profess thus to rely on the mercy of God, that the conclusions to which they come in their own case are based not on reason, but on feeling; that they are the suggestions of a hope which can pretend to no solid basis; that they cannot be referred to any *facts* in the world, and that therefore they are perfectly valueless to man.

II. The question which next occurs is, whether repentance for sin will of itself be a sufficient ground of hope without an atonement.

There can be no doubt that men often rely on this. Either as a sort of expiation for sin, or as recommending them to God, or as being all that is possible in the case, or as in some unknown way making it proper for God to pardon on that account, men do rely on this as a ground of hope. They would allege that they themselves are required to forgive an offending neighbour; that a parent should forgive a child; that it would be unjust, in the intercourse of man with man, to refuse to forgive when one who has offended is penitent; and, they ask, why may not God be expected to forgive in the same way? If it would be unjust in man *not* to forgive in such circumstances, why is it not equally unjust in God? They would refer, perhaps, to the fact that even in the Bible we are commanded to forgive an offending brother “not only seven times, but seventy

times seven," if he turn and repent, (Luke xvii. 4, Matt. xviii. 21, 22,) and that without any atonement or reparation; and they would ask whether we are to suppose that God will act on a different principle from that which he requires in us. Thus, in a quotation before made, Dr. Priestley says, "We are commanded to forgive others as we ourselves hope to be forgiven, and to be merciful as our Father who is in heaven is merciful. But surely we are not thereby authorized to insist upon any atonement or satisfaction before we give up our resentments towards an offending brother. Indeed, how could it deserve the name of forgiveness if we did?"

The inquiry now is, whether this view is sustained by the actual course of events in the world so as to be a just foundation of hope for man; that is, whether it is a matter of fact under the Divine administration that repentance for sin arrests the effects of transgression and restores the offender to the favour of God; whether it so *reinstates* him in the position in which he was before the offence was committed that he has no reason to dread any infliction of the penalty of law? If it does, then it may be argued with plausibility that it might be safe for man to trust to the effect of repentance without an atonement.

In reference to this inquiry, the following remarks may be made.

(1.) It is clear that repentance is not what the law demands. No law of God or of man contains this as a part of its requirement, that there shall be repentance for a fault; that is, that an offence may be tolerated by the law on condition that there shall be a

suitable expression of penitence after the offence has been committed. In no country, barbarous or civilized, has such an article been inserted into a code of laws as a part of its provisions or as connected with its administration. No parent would feel that this was a safe principle in the field of domestic legislation, even with all the guarantees and securities that exist to secure the observance of law in the sanctity of the household. No friend would consent to this as one of the conditions of friendship,—that any or all the obligations of truth, kindness, respect, fidelity, might be disregarded; that the proposed friend might even invade the sanctity of conjugal life and rob him of domestic peace, on condition that there should be suitable repentance and reformation afterwards. No man could make this a condition on which he would be willing to live with his fellow man; no neighbourhood would be safe if these were the terms on which it was understood that neighbours were to keep up their intercourse with each other. *Law* knows but two things,—the absolute precept, and the penalty: the one to be obeyed, the other to be suffered. All else than this belongs to another system and cannot be regarded as any part of the demand of law. It could not be argued beforehand, therefore, that such an arrangement was to be expected in the Divine legislation. In fact, there is no proof in the nature of things that such an arrangement exists in the Divine constitution respecting those who are the subjects of law.

(2.) It is a matter of fact that mere repentance does *not* remove the effects of sin and restore an

offender to the condition in which he was before he committed the offence. "The present conduct of the penitent will receive God's approbation, but the reformation of the sinner cannot have a retrospective effect. The agent may be changed, but his former sins cannot be thereby cancelled: the convert and the sinner are the same individual person, and the agent must be answerable for his whole conduct."* Even Cicero goes no further on this subject than to assert, *Quem pœnitet peccasse, pene est innocens.* 'The penitent is only *almost* innocent.' Does repentance bring back the property that has been squandered in gambling or dissipation, the health that has been ruined by debauchery and intemperance, the reputation that has been lost by fraud and dishonesty, the public favour that has been forfeited by forgery or fraud, the vigour of early years that has been wasted by profligacy? Will any penitence, however sincere or prolonged, bring up from the grave the man that has been murdered, and restore him to his family and friends? Will it call back to the ways of purity the young female that has been led into a career of sin by the arts of the seducer? No. All these are now fixed. They belong to the past. They cannot be changed. The health is permanently destroyed; the property is wasted; the sacred citadel of virtue has been taken; the murdered man is in his grave; the victim of seduction is ruined. No repentance on the part of him who has caused any of these things can ever change them; no repentance can place the offender

* Magee on Atonement and Sacrifice, p. 66.

himself in the situation in which he was before he committed the crime. By reformation a man may indeed regain an honourable position in society; but even under the most favourable circumstances this removes but a part of the evils caused by a sinful course. It brings back nothing that was lost; it changes no facts in the past; it furnishes no assurance of the Divine favour. The consequences of a sinful course are not to be turned aside by floods of tears. The erring female cannot avert the effects of a criminal course by nights of weeping,—by the fact that the heart is broken by the remembrance of crime.

(3.) Equally clear is it that mere repentance does not remove the effects of crime on the conscience of the offender himself. Even though all the external consequences of sin could be averted by an act of penitence, still, there would be consequences of guilt on the mind itself which would not be removed. Remorse, the sense of self-dissatisfaction, the apprehension of what may occur hereafter, would still remain. There is nothing in the bitterest repentance that has any effect in silencing the deep self-disapprobation which arises from the commission of crime. That springs up in the mind entirely irrespective of the apprehension of the consequences of guilt and the dread of the future,—however it may, as a secondary effect, *suggest* that there is much to dread hereafter. That feeling of self-disapprobation or remorse is one quite independent of any loss of health or property or reputation as the effect of the deed done. It stands by itself. It springs directly out of the crime. It would exist if there *were* no

future to be dreaded, and would exist in view of the crime itself if it had done nothing to waste health, to destroy property, or to injure reputation. And this is in no manner affected by mere repentance. An offender, no matter how much he weeps, no matter how bitter or how prolonged may be his penitence, cannot, does not, feel that the crime which he has committed is in any way affected by his sorrow for it. It is none the less; it seems to him none the less. Even should he wholly reform, and become eminently virtuous, that would not affect his own sense of the evil of the sin, except to deepen his sense of that evil. The same thing is true in his apprehension of what is to come as the reward of sin; for sin not only produces remorse in view of the past, but it directs the mind on to that which is to come. By a law of our nature, the apprehension of what is to occur beyond the grave springs up in the mind just as the feeling of remorse does,—an apprehension quite separate from remorse, indeed, in its nature, though conjoined with it in fact. It is so separate that it must be dealt with in its own way, and be removed by an arrangement that shall have a special adaptation to it. And this is not removed by repentance. The mind of the guilty man does not feel any assurance, however deep the penitence, that there will be no consequences of sin to be apprehended in a future world. After all the tears that he may shed; after the keenest mental sorrow that his mind can experience at the remembrance of guilt, it is still true that the apprehension in regard to the world to come will not be lessened. There is a conviction that the crime deserves a

deeper retribution than the mere shedding of tears; and there will be a conviction that nothing has been done *by* repentance to furnish any security that the sin will not draw on fearful consequences in the future world. No act of penitence, no tears or mental sorrows, can remove from the mind the consciousness of guilt; none can remove the apprehension of the wrath to come. No such act can *secure* to a guilty man peace on a bed of death; none, therefore, can accomplish what is needful to have accomplished in behalf of the guilty.

It is clear, therefore, that there is no reason why men should rely on *repentance* as a ground of hope in regard to the remission of sin. It is certain that there is no such ground of hope given by God himself to mankind; for the rejecter of revelation pretends to no promise of this kind, and no such promise is made to man in the Bible. It is equally certain that the course of events furnishes no such ground of hope; for, as we have seen, mere repentance does *not* remove the effects of guilt and restore the offender to his former position, does not take away remorse from the mind, and does not remove the dread of the wrath to come. And it is equally certain that it has not been one of the principles of natural religion that mankind would be restored to the Divine favour on mere repentance; for, if there has been any one thing more unequivocally declared by the conduct of mankind than any other, it is that something *more* than this is necessary. All nations have believed in the necessity of *sacrifices* for sin. Everywhere upon the earth bloody offerings have been presented to the gods as an expiation for guilt.

Penances and pilgrimages, fastings and tortures, have been added to penitence. Bullocks, rams, goats, prisoners of war, old men and children, have been sacrificed to the gods to expiate crime and to secure the efficacy of repentance; and from the light of nature it is impossible to *demonstrate*—and therefore it is wrong to *assume*—that mere repentance will restore an offender to the Divine favour. Hence on this ground we argue the necessity of an atonement. That the atonement of Christ would meet the difficulties in the case, and would accomplish the effects necessary to be secured, is a point which a rejecter of revelation may fairly require us to demonstrate.

III. The next inquiry is, whether an expiation for sin can be so made by *punishment* as to answer the ends of law and to render an atonement unnecessary; that is, whether a sinner may so rely on the sufferings which come upon him as the fruit of sin that an atonement is not necessary in his case. In other words, is sin sufficiently expiated by the sufferings endured in the world as the consequence of transgression?

In considering this question, it will be necessary to examine at some length the subject of *punishment*.

(1.) The first point relates to the views which prevail among men in regard to the *design* of punishment.

The prevailing views on that subject are the following:—

(a.) That it is to protect the community from a repetition of the offence.

(b.) That it is to deter others, by example, from the commission of the same offence.

(c.) That it is to reform the offender.

In these views there would be found no element in the notion of punishment based on the idea that it is an expression of the sense entertained by the community of the *evil* of crime as such; or that it is a carrying-out of the idea involved in the phrase that the offender OUGHT to be punished.

The arrangements in the community in regard to punishment correspond with the views just referred to, and with no other.

(a.) There are arrangements *to protect the community from a repetition of the offence*, by removing the offender by death or by imprisonment. According to this view, punishment by death is not designed to express a just sense of the community of the act of murder, but to protect the community by removing from the world one who might, if he were suffered to live, repeat the act for which he is condemned to the gallows; and the confinement in a penitentiary is not designed as an expression of what is *due* to the crime, but is intended to secure the community against the acts of one who could not safely be suffered to go at large.

It is probably in accordance with this view that the modern notion that punishment is to be, as far as possible, in secret, has obtained such a prevalence. Executions are no longer public; and the utmost care is taken, in all cases of ignominious punishment, to hide it from the knowledge of the world. The prisoner in the penitentiary is not known by his own name, but by the number on his cell. No

one who may be admitted into the prison is allowed to learn the names of the convicts. Every arrangement possible is made to conceal the prisoner from the world, and to send him forth again with the fact of his having been in the penitentiary obliterated as far as possible, and with a very prevalent feeling that he has fully *expiated* his crime by his imprisonment, if he has not, in fact, been a martyr. The community aims, indeed, to protect itself; but it seems to have a shrinking back from the very idea of *punishment* as such. The feeling with many is very slight—and it is to be apprehended that it is becoming more and more feeble—that sufferings are inflicted under the processes of law on those who commit crime because they are *deserved*, or because there is any thing in the law itself, or in the constitution of man, which demands that the offender should be *punished*, or which makes it proper in itself that for such a crime the offender *ought* to suffer.

(b.) In like manner, there are arrangements to carry out the idea that *the design of punishment is to deter others from committing the same offence*. That this is one end of punishment there is no reason to doubt; but the remark now made is that there is a very prevalent impression that this is the sole design of punishment, or that it is no part of that design to express the idea that crime ought to be punished because it is crime. A large part of the arrangements for punishment are based on the idea that the sole object of punishment is to deter others from crime. Undoubtedly it is right that the idea should be kept before the community that this is a legiti-

mate end of punishment, provided that the essential idea, which will soon be adverted to, is not lost sight of,—that punishment is intended as a proper expression of what is *due* to crime.

(c.) Thus, also, there are arrangements based on the idea that punishment is designed to reform the offender. This is becoming a favourite idea with a certain class of philanthropists; and there is a demand springing up in the community that *all* the arrangements for punishment shall be adjusted to this idea, or that this shall be the primary and prominent thought in relation to punishment before the community. The demand goes to the extent that, where there is evidence of reformation, the sentence of the law shall on that account be remitted and the convict discharged.* According to this idea, the penitentiary is not so much a place of *punishment* as a *school of reform*. But the purpose of reformation can be no part of the sentence of the law. This idea cannot be incorporated into that sentence; nor is the idea incorporated into that sentence, however it may be in public opinion, that when punishment shall have secured the reformation of the convict, *therefore* he shall be discharged. No tribunal could safely introduce that idea into its adjudications;

* As an illustration of the prevailing state of feeling on this subject, I may refer to a remark made by the Governor of one of the States of the Union when speaking of the applications for pardon:—"A distinguished jurist of this State, in a recent conversation with me, advanced the doctrine that when a prisoner gave *satisfactory* evidence of having become a religious man—as proof of which he was contented and did not petition to be liberated—no injury could result from extending to him a pardon."—*Journal of the Prison-Discipline Society for January, 1857, p. 17.*

and, whatever may be the views which prevail in the community on the subject, *the forms of law* always will, and always must, express the idea that punishment is designed for another purpose than that of reformation. We shall see, in the progress of our remarks, notwithstanding what is said on this point, and notwithstanding the expectations which are cherished based on the idea that the design of punishment is the reformation of the offender, that the dependence is not, and cannot be, on the *punishment*, but that it must be, and is, on a *side-influence* which operates *in spite* of the regular effect of punishment.

(2.) It becomes, then, a very important inquiry, What are the ends of punishment? If these are the true ends, then all the arrangements should be made in accordance with them. If the sole object is to protect the community from a repetition of the offence, or to deter others by example, or to reform the offender, then it is clear that, if these objects could be secured, the offender would be safely and properly discharged.

(a.) The design of punishment is not *revenge* or *vengeance*; for it is not to gratify private feeling or to redress private wrong,—which is the true notion of revenge or vengeance. It is not the infliction of pain for an offence committed against an *individual*. It is always, though it may be *for* a wrong done to an individual, inflicted for the offence regarded as perpetrated against the peace of a community; against the lawgiver; against the law itself. When a man is punished for assault and battery, it is not pain inflicted considered as a recompense to

the individual who has been injured or wronged: it is as a just retribution for a crime against the peace of society and the honour of the law, and the punishment is measured by that consideration alone. When a man is punished for murder, it is not as an act of recompense to the murdered man,—for he is beyond the reach of all such recompense,—but it is for an offence against the law and the peace of the community. The murdered man is in no manner referred to in the case except as one over whom the law was designed to throw its protection; and the purpose is to maintain the honour of that law and to prevent its violation. In the infancy of society, in the days of savage barbarity, when there were no tribunals of justice, a relative of the murdered man—an avenger of blood—might take the matter into his own hands and inflict summary justice on the murderer, and that would be properly *revenge*; but the arrangements of a civilized community are designed to take the case out of the hands of the individual. The crime is punished, not as a matter of private vengeance or satisfaction, but as due to public justice. The individual who has suffered wrong is not even represented in the transaction. The *law* only is represented; and the affair is no longer one of a private character, but becomes one pertaining wholly to the public.

(b.) In this public view, and with this changed notion of punishment, the object is no longer to inflict the same amount of suffering which was caused by the offence. That *was* the purpose so long as it was a private matter; and that *was* the principle in some of the earlier statutes on the subject of crime.

An individual inflicted the same pain which he had himself suffered. The friend of the murdered person—the avenger of blood—sought the death of the murderer. In default of that, in some of the earlier and ruder stages of society, he demanded the life of some one of the tribe or family of the murderer, and pursued this by a steady purpose until he could bury his tomahawk in the head of some one of the family or the tribe, and thus avenge the blood of the slain. The same principle operates in the notion of retaliation in war; and it cannot be denied that the principle of inflicting the same amount of pain that had been endured was found in the legislation of the Jewish code:—“Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.” Ex. xxi. 23, 24, 25.

In the progress of society, the views of men have been changed on this subject, and this principle no longer enters into the notion of punishment, and this is no longer the measure by which it is inflicted. “To apportion the punishment to the offence does not mean to make the culprit suffer the same quantity of evil which he inflicted by his crime: that would be both impossible and unjust.”*

(c.) What, then, is the design of punishment? I answer: While it has as a subordinate design the purpose of deterring others from the commission of the same offence and securing the safety of the community, it has a much higher end as its main design. It is *an expression of the sense entertained of the*

* Livingston, Criminal Code, p. 129.

value of the law, and is the measure of the sense which is entertained of that value. It is inflicted because it is *right* that it should be inflicted. It is inflicted because the offence *deserves* such an expression. There is, back of any idea of restraining others, or of reforming the offender himself, or of protecting the community, the feeling that it is *RIGHT* that the offender should be made to suffer; that he *OUGHT* to be punished; that it would be *WRONG* if he were not punished. And, when we see a man justly punished, we think of this not as tending to reform him, or as designed to protect the community, or to be an example to deter others; but we think of him as suffering that which our nature tells us is right, whatever may be the consequences in these other respects; and in that view of the matter we acquiesce in the infliction. We may rejoice in the belief that these incidental effects will follow from the infliction of the punishment; but we should regard it as a violation of justice if these views should guide the magistrate in determining the amount of punishment; that is, if it were only so much as would best tend to reform the offender, or to deter others, or to protect the community. We demand something more: we demand that which will in some proper sense express what the crime *deserves*. The sufferer in the case, in our apprehension, is not a *martyr*: he is a *criminal*. The sufferings do not make an appeal to our compassion; for just so far as they do they are either unjust, or our feelings are wrong. Our nature teaches us to discriminate carefully between the ills which one suffers by misfortune and the ills which he suffers by crime; between the sufferings

of the martyr and the sufferings of the murderer; between the man who languishes in prison under an unjust sentence and the man who lies there under a just sentence of law. In nothing are our feelings more accurately defined than they are in making this distinction; in nothing do we, when we act out our nature, discriminate more accurately than in the feelings which we have towards the innocent who suffer, and the guilty. And just so far as the same emotions come to be cherished in a community in regard to the sufferings of the innocent and of the guilty,—just so far as the feelings which we have in respect to the martyr become our prevailing feelings towards the man who is suffering the penalty of the law for his crime,—just so far as the distinction between a just compassion for an innocent sufferer and the feeling of approbation which we have on the proper infliction of the penalty of the law on the guilty shall be obliterated in public sentiment,—just so far will all the proper ends of justice be defeated, and the processes of justice become a mockery. If there is any thing that is deeply fixed in the nature of man, it is the conviction that certain courses of conduct *deserve* certain results; that when crimes are committed they should excite in us the feeling that they deserve punishment and are not mere objects of sympathy; that they should be treated *as* crimes, and not as virtues; and that they who have committed them should be treated as *criminals*, and not as *martyrs*.

(3.) Punishment does not, in fact, reform men, and cannot be so arranged as to become a reliable means of accomplishing that purpose. A few re-

marks may make the exact truth on this subject plain.

(a.) Punishment may *restrain* men, so that the proper means of reformation may be applied with success. Detention in prison withdraws a wicked man from the bad influences which would otherwise surround him, and may be made the occasion of bringing better influences to bear on his mind; or the penalties which the law inflicts may so deter him from the commission of crime as to allow the better feelings of his nature to become operative, and thus lead him to become a different man. Punishment restrains from outward guilt; but its power terminates there. It does not go down into the depths of the soul and secure an effectual reformation; and our hope of the reformation of an offender must be in something which is beyond the reach of punishment.

(b.) The *tendency* of punishment is not to reform men. It probably rarely happens when a man is punished that he does not feel that a wrong has been done him. The punishment, in his apprehension, is too severe, or he feels that he is not worse than others who escape unpunished; and he regards it as an act of injustice and partiality that *he* is arrested and punished when so many equally guilty are allowed to escape. Possibly, too, he looks at the circumstances of his birth and education; at the temptations which were set before him; at his own resistance until he was overcome by the power of evil; at the fact that he was led into the course which he has pursued by the example of others who have been more fortunate in their circumstances in life, or more favoured by the

courts, and who have escaped. He remembers too, perhaps, that of which the court and jury take no cognizance,—which they knew nothing of, and which in their verdict, therefore, they do not take into the account,—his own long internal struggle against sin until, in a fatal and unguarded moment, he was overcome by sudden temptation.

The effect of all this is to array him against the law, and to lead him to feel that his condition is that of a wronged, an injured, an unfortunate man,—a man deserving commiseration, and not a dungeon; that he is a martyr, and not a criminal. Just so far as this feeling extends—and it may be doubted whether the effect here adverted to does not extend even to cases where a man knows that the sentence is just—the effect is to embitter the mind against the law and against the administrators of the law. It is a rare thing, as any one may remember in recalling the scenes of his own childhood, even when it is known that the punishment inflicted in school was deserved, that the boy does not always remember it with an embittered feeling,—a feeling that a *wrong* was done him by thus exposing him to public shame. It is a rare thing that one in subsequent life meets a teacher who has thus punished him, without the consciousness in his bosom of an aversion to the man,—a feeling that he did him a wrong. The memory of the supposed injury goes with him through life. At the time when the punishment was inflicted, his mind was in no state to see the evil of what he had done; nor was there any thing in the infliction itself that was adapted to create a sense of that evil; nor have his subsequent reflections on the transaction

done any thing to impress a sense of that evil on his mind. The direct effect of punishment always is to embitter the feelings; and, valuable as it is for purposes of restraint, and indispensable as it is for the safety of society, and right as it is as an expression of the value of the law and of the evil of violating law, it has no tendency of itself to secure reformation.

(c.) In the history of punishment, it is a matter of fact that it has *not* been effectual in securing the reformation of the guilty. If cases can be referred to where those who are punished are reformed, it is, as we shall soon see, from some other influence than that of punishment. But it is probable that there has been nothing more marked in the history of the world than the failure of punishment, as such, in securing the reformation of the guilty. It is a well-known and admitted fact that, when convicts have been placed together, the effect has been only to confirm the experienced in their guilt, and to instruct those who were less guilty in the art of iniquity; and when solitary confinement has been adopted as the mode of punishment, unless there is some *side*-influence to lead the convict to reformation, the effect has been only to embitter his feelings and to prepare him to take revenge for the wrong done him when he can escape from his prison, or when his sentence has expired. Nothing up to the time of Howard was more marked or well understood than that the effect of punishment is *not* to reform men, and that there is nothing in chains, in the rack, in solitude, in hunger, in cold, in hard and

unrequited labour, that tends to soften the heart or to send forth the prisoner a renovated man.

It is beginning to be understood now in all the efforts that are made to reform those who are convicted of crime, that it is by another influence than that of *punishment* that reformation is to be effected. It is not to be done by the harshness and severity of punishment: it is by sympathy and compassion. It is by calling in the aid of other feelings than those which are concerned in the infliction of pain. It is by showing kindness for the convict; by evincing sympathy with him as a man; by introducing the provisions of the great scheme for reforming the guilty, and recovering the wandering and the lost, in the gospel of Christ. The efforts of those who are endeavouring to *reform* convicts are directed to the work of introducing the gospel into prisons and of securing its influence over the hearts of prisoners; and just so far as there is evidence that *that* secures an effect on the mind, so far is there hope of permanent reformation, and no further. It is not punishment that does this: it is a side-influence altogether; it is a system wholly apart from punishment. It is not the turnkey or the executioner that is the agent in reformation: it is the moral instructor,—the minister of the gospel.

(*d.*) In accordance with this view, it is a fact that no security is felt as to the permanent reformation of a prisoner from the mere effect of punishment. No one would anticipate that on account of any such effect it would be safe to discharge him from prison. There are no instances that can be referred to where mere punishment has secured an effectual and per-

manent reformation in a convict. Discharged prisoners, unless there is evidence that they have been brought under a moral influence, are *not* regarded as desirable members of society; nor does a community feel safe when such men are poured upon it from a prison. As a matter of fact, a large portion of them show that there has been no reformation whatever, and are often soon recommitted to prison for a repetition of crime.

(e.) Thus, too, it is in the world at large. Punishment does not make men's temper or moral characters better; chastisement does not reform. The sufferings that come upon the drunkard—his loss of property, the disgrace that attends him, the diseases which his habit engenders, have no tendency to reform him; scarcely do they ever check him in his career. The sorrows that come upon a gambler—his loss of property, his disgrace, his anguish of mind—have no tendency to reform him. The master-passion still controls him and urges him on, notwithstanding all the woes and sorrows that spring up in his path. So the afflictions that come upon men directly from the hand of God seem to have no tendency to reform them. Under those afflictions the heart becomes more hardened, unless the gospel of Christ is applied to the soul; and, however they may *check* the wicked in their career, it is the gospel only that secures their permanent reformation.

(4.) There is one more consideration to be suggested in regard to the hope cherished by men that salvation may be secured as the effect of punishment without an atonement. It is this:—If salvation *is* to be attained in that way, it must be *by having endured*

the full penalty of the law. If that *were* done, it is to be admitted that salvation would follow as a matter of course. If the entire penalty of the law is exhausted, if *all* that sin deserves has been expiated, the law can have no further demands, and the offender might claim salvation. But he would be saved by *justice*,—not by *mercy*. He would assert a *right* to admission to heaven; he would not go there by *grace*. This is the opinion of a portion of those who believe in the doctrine of ‘universal salvation.’ The foundation of their belief is that men will suffer according to their deserts in a future state; that the degree and the duration of their sufferings will be different according to the different degrees of their guilt; but that all will ultimately exhaust the penalty of the law, and, having suffered all that their sins deserve, will then be saved. That is, they will be saved by *justice*; and to them an atonement would be useless. And, if the full penalty of the law was endured, they would undoubtedly be saved. But who can demonstrate that the full penalty of the law has been borne in any case? Who would undertake to bear it as the basis of his own hope of heaven? It is certainly *possible* that the penalty of the law may be everlasting punishment; and no one who undertakes to endure the penalty of the law can demonstrate that this is *not* what the law of God denounces against sin. No one can prove that at a given point in the future he could assume that he *had* endured all that the law demands and could therefore assert a right to be saved. No one can refer to a promise or an intimation that such a period *will* ever arrive. But,

unless this can be done, then an atonement is absolutely necessary for the salvation of the sinner; that is, something is required which will answer the ends of the penalty of the law, and make it proper to release the offender *as if* he had himself borne the penalty.

IV. An atonement is necessary because it is impossible for an offender by his future good conduct to repair the errors of the past, or to *accumulate* so much merit as to be a compensation or an offset for his former sins.

There can be no doubt that men often secretly rely on this. The case is similar to what would occur in a child who had been disobedient, and who hoped to make amends for his fault by his future good conduct; or of one who had a task assigned him and who had neglected it, and who hoped to make up for it by an additional amount of extra service; or of an officer in an army who had been cowardly or had neglected his duty, and who should endeavour to compensate for it by some extraordinary and uncommanded vigilance or deed of valour; or of a servant who had omitted to do what was required of him, and who expected by labour performed at hours when his service was not wanted to make up for his idleness or neglect. In these cases the idea would be that there would be such an accumulation of merit, or that there would be so much service performed beyond what was required, that it could be set over to the credit of the past, *as if* it had been performed then; that is, that as much service had been rendered *on the whole* as if

there had been a faithful performance of duty at the time when it was required.

The question now is, not whether there may not be a case of this kind in regard to service demanded in the performance of a *task*, where the same amount of *profit* on the whole would accrue to the employer, but whether a compensation can be made in that way for *crime*. Can this be the ground of hope towards God?

In reference to this, the following remarks may be made:—

(1.) It seems to be a clear principle that, in reference to morals, no man can do more than he is at present bound to do. We may indeed conceive that a servant who has a task assigned him for the day may have performed that task, and may still have unoccupied time in which he might render a service that was not specified in the contract, and which *might*, therefore, be set over to the account of a former deficiency, if such a deficiency had occurred from sickness or from any other cause. But no such case is conceivable in regard to morals. At no one time can any man be *more* honest, true, just, chaste, benevolent, than he ought to be at that time. At no one time can a child be more obedient to his father, can a husband be more faithful towards his wife, can a parent be more just in his dealings towards his children or strive more to promote their real welfare, than at that very time he ought to be. At no one time can a man love God more than he ought at that very time; for the command is binding on him at that supposed time in the same sense in which it has always been,—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy strength." (Mark xii. 30.) It is impossible, therefore, that in any such service there can be a work of supererogation, or that there can be a service rendered which is not demanded at that time and which can be set over to the credit of a past deficient account; or, in other words, that there can be any *time* not covered by the immediate command of God which can be employed in rendering a service that shall compensate for a former waste of time or for a former neglect of duty.

And as these remarks apply to men now, so they, for the same reason, apply to the men of all times,—to the 'saints' of former generations as well as to the 'saints' now. If the supposed services of the 'saints' of other ages, in extraordinary fastings, prayers, pilgrimages, toils, labours, self-sacrifices, were meritorious at all, they were meritorious only as demanded by the law of God at that very time; for the law of God must always be the rule of that which is truly virtuous. It follows, therefore, that they could not at any time perform a service which was not demanded then and which could be set over to a deficiency of former merit in their own lives, or which could be garnered up to be made available, under the disbursing power of a priesthood, to supply the deficiency of men in future ages. The only Being who ever could place himself in such a position that his obedience to the law *could* be made available to supply the deficiencies of others is He who was not *bound* to obedience, from the fact that he was himself the lawgiver, and who could, therefore, so place

himself in a condition of *voluntary* obedience that his merits could become available for others. This is the Christian idea of redemption; and in this respect the Christian scheme differs from all others in regard to a work of supererogation or of extraordinary merit.

(2.) It is equally clear that any future obedience on the part of one who has violated law and who has incurred its penalty does not affect the past. The past is fixed and cannot be changed. All historical facts become unchangeable, and must remain just as they occurred forever. A crime may be forgiven or forgotten; but it cannot be changed. The individual who committed it may change,—for he may become an eminently good and useful man; but that does not in the slightest degree modify the fact in regard to the crime. That remains just as it occurred,—more enduring in the nature of things than any record of brass could make it,—than if it ‘were printed in a book, or graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock.’ The act of murder *was* committed. No future good conduct can obliterate or modify that fact. The slanderous words *have been* uttered. No future acts of kindness can change or modify that fact. The act of seduction *has been* perpetrated. There is no power in heaven or on earth that can make that cease to be an historical fact. There it is; and there it will remain forever. No amount of future good conduct can summon the murdered man from the grave, call back the slanderous words, restore innocence to the seduced, or obliterate the act of injustice, oppression, and fraud. The sin of Judas is fixed forever; the crimes of Tiberius, Nero, Alex-

ander VI., Cæsar Borgia, Richard III., Philip II., and the Duke of Alva, are historical facts, never to be blotted out from the records of the universe.

(3.) In any case, even where there may *seem* to be a restitution or a compensation for the sins of the past, it is of a very partial and imperfect nature. A young man who is idle and dissipated *may*, indeed, by subsequent industry and virtue, do much to gain an elevated and honourable position in life, and may *seem* to make up for the follies of his early years. But it is *seeming* only. There are two things which he cannot do. (a.) He cannot, by any subsequent good conduct, change the *fact* that he was idle and dissipated. (b.) He cannot gain the position which he *might* have secured if he had *not* been idle and dissipated. There was nothing *in* that course of life which was in any way preparatory to subsequent elevation; and, whatever diligence he may manifest in future life, or whatever virtue he may possess, the time spent in idleness and dissipation was at least so much time absolutely *lost* in the sum-total of his existence. It contributed nothing to what he ultimately became; it took away much that *might* have contributed to place him on a higher elevation than he ultimately secured. He 'fell off in the early part of the race;' and no subsequent exertions can supply that deficiency, or put him as far on the 'course' as if he had not fallen back in the beginning. Perchance in a long life he can barely reach the point at which he might have *begun* actual life if his early years had been spent in the ways of industry and virtue.

V. An atonement is necessary because all other

sacrifices made for sin fail in the object which they are designed to secure.

One thing has been indeed established by the almost universal prevalence of bloody offerings for sin,—the deep conviction felt by mankind of the *necessity* of an atonement. On no other point has the faith of mankind been more decidedly expressed than on this. It is impossible to explain the existence of bloody sacrifices in the world except on the supposition that they express the conviction of mankind that a sacrifice for sin is necessary. Those offerings were undoubtedly made with the belief that they were necessary to appease the anger of God, and with the hope that they might avail for that purpose. The Jews entertained no other idea of securing the favour of God than by such sacrifices; and every victim that smoked on their altars was an illustration of the sentiment which was at the foundation of their religion,—that “without the shedding of blood is no remission.” (Heb. ix. 22.) All the sacrifices of the pagan world gave utterance to the same deep conviction of the human soul and were founded on the same belief. Whatever their origin may have been,—whether they are the result of a traditionary faith having its foundation in an early revelation, or whether they sprung up in the deep conviction of the human soul itself that such sacrifices are necessary,—in either case they express the all-pervading belief of man that an atonement is necessary to expiate sin.

The only inquiry that needs to be prosecuted on the point now before us is, whether there is any evidence that such bloody offerings will be accepted

as an atonement, or can be a proper reliance for the hope of pardon.

This inquiry need not be pursued at great length; for there are none in Christian lands who rely on such sacrifices, and they will not be renewed in those lands. Bloody offerings in Christian lands have come to an end. The effect of the coming of Christ has been, somehow, to put an end to sacrifices wherever his religion prevails. It put an end to Jewish sacrifices,—for it was a fulfilment of the whole design of the typical representation,—and the Jew offers now no bloody sacrifice; nor will he ever do it again. He has no temple, no altar, no priest; nor will he ever rebuild the temple or the altar, or clothe any one of his own nation with sacerdotal vestments again. Infidels also abjure the whole doctrine of sacrifice. They build no temples; they erect no altars; they consecrate no priests; they lead up no victim whose life is to be offered as an atonement for sin; and it is not necessary to show to *them* that no reliance can be placed on bloody offerings as an atonement for sin. Yet, in order to a complete examination of the subject, it is proper to show that no reliance *can* be placed by man on any such offerings for human guilt.

(1.) There is no promise or assurance that such bloody offerings will be effectual in expiating sin. Unless they are founded among the heathen on tradition,—as has been supposed,—they seem to have been of the nature of an *experiment*, to see whether they might not avail to put away guilt, or whether they might not *possibly* in some unknown way secure the favour of God. But it is certain that among the

heathen they were originated by no *promise* that remission of sin would be the consequence of such offerings. Among the Jews, where there was a Divine command for offering them, the purpose for which they were to be offered is clearly defined. They had no intrinsic efficacy, but were intended to adumbrate a more perfect sacrifice in the future; and all their efficacy was derived from their reference to the one great atonement. At no time, either among the heathen or the Jews, had they power to give peace to a troubled conscience; for the statement of the apostle accords with all that there was in their nature:—"Which [that is, the first tabernacle] was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, *as pertaining to the conscience.*" (Heb. ix. 9.) At no time did they so satisfy the mind as to make it unnecessary that they should be repeated; for the statement of the apostle is true in this respect also:—"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." (Heb. x. 1-3.) As the design of sacrifices among the Jews was typical,—as they had no efficacy in themselves, but derived all their efficacy from that great atonement which they adumbrated,—when the real sacrifice was offered and the great atonement

was made for human guilt on the cross, they ceased as a matter of course, and ceased forever. It is demonstrably true, as a matter of historical verity, that they ceased to be offered very soon after the Redeemer died. At the moment when he died they lost all their significancy, and within a brief period the altar was overthrown, never to be rebuilt, the temple where they were offered was rased to the ground, never to be raised again, and the entire system passed away. No human power could restore the offering of those sacrifices. Not all the imperial power of Julian, called forth by his determined purpose to overturn Christianity and to defeat the prediction of the Saviour that the temple should not be rebuilt, was sufficient to rear that temple again and to restore the abolished worship; and to this day Jewish sacrifices have never been offered again, and they never will be. The scattered tribes of the nation are utterly confounded; and nothing is more certain than that the offering of those sacrifices will never be resumed. They never had any intrinsic efficacy in putting away sin: they would have even no *significance* now.

Without significance now to the Jew, and without a promise of acceptance as offered by the heathen, they are in fact, and with propriety, rejected by the infidel portion of mankind. The rejecters of the great atonement renounce all idea of sacrifice. They have no temples, no altars, no sacred orders of men; they present no bloody sacrifices; they have even no form of worship. In the entire world there is no *infidel* altar erected; for it is a remarkable fact that wherever the gospel comes even they who refuse

to embrace it renounce the idea of sacrifice altogether, and that the atonement made by the Redeemer puts an end to sacrifice everywhere:—among the Jews, as fulfilling the design of all their typical rites and forms; among the heathen, as showing them the vanity of their own oblations by revealing a better; among Christians, by disclosing a sacrifice that meets all the wants of their nature, and causing them to feel that there is no need of any other; and among infidels, who in the mighty effort to reject the greater—the real atonement—sweep away from their minds the whole doctrine of sacrifice, for when the sacrifice that *has* efficacy is rejected there is no reason for retaining that which could have no efficacy except from its relation to this.

(2.) In the nature of the case there seems to be no reason to suppose that the sacrifice of an innocent animal *would* expiate guilt, or would, in the Divine mind, constitute a reason why a sinner should be forgiven. Nothing of this kind occurs in the transactions between man and man. If one has wronged another, he may hope that an equivalent for the wrong done—an ox for an ox, or a sheep for a sheep—would satisfy him who had been wronged; but why should he suppose, if he has slandered him or done an act of personal violence, that it would appease him to sacrifice in his presence an innocent animal? to burn it before him, or to pour out its blood at his feet? There is nothing in the nature of the case which would suggest this; nor has it ever been resorted to in the dealings between man and man. So, when a man has violated the law of the land, it has never occurred to the mind of the of-

fender that he could make an atonement for the offence by the shedding of the blood of an innocent animal; nor has it ever occurred to the courts of justice that an expiation could be made in that way. In like manner, so far as the nature of the case is concerned, there would seem to be no reason to suppose, unless there was an express statement to that effect, that the shedding of the blood of an innocent animal would be an expiation for guilt before God. It is easy, indeed, to perceive a propriety in *thank-offerings* to the Deity. There is an obvious fitness in devoting a portion of a harvest to the honour or support of religion, as a grateful acknowledgment for the goodness of Him who 'crowns the year with his goodness.' There was much that commended itself to the natural sense of obligation in man, in hanging in the temples of the gods, as was done in ancient times, shields and spears and helmets, as an acknowledgment of their interposition in securing a victory. These are natural expressions of gratitude. They occur in the transactions between man and man; and it is not unnatural to transfer this feeling to the intercourse of man with a Divine being. But what is there in the nature of the case to suggest the idea of a *bloody offering*? What reason is there to suppose that, under any circumstances and for any purpose, it would be acceptable to God? What reason especially is there to suppose that it would expiate crime? As an expression of thankfulness a bloodless offering might be supposed to be acceptable; but on what ground could it be supposed that an offering of blood would turn away wrath?

These considerations seem so plain that we are shut up to the conclusion that the idea of bloody sacrifices must have had its origin in a Divine appointment, and that it was not one of the suggestions which spring up in the mind of man himself. But, if of Divine appointment, its acceptableness and its efficacy must be limited to the idea contemplated by that appointment; and as that, so far as we have any knowledge, was originally to typify or adumbrate the great atonement, such a sacrifice cannot be relied on now as an expiation for sin.

It is clear, therefore, that no reliance can be placed on bloody sacrifices as an expiation for sin. Those sacrifices, under the Jewish code, had a purpose,—a purpose easily susceptible of explanation as designed to keep up the idea that an atonement would be made in the world, and as pointing to that. As existing in the heathen world, such sacrifices may be regarded as having a bearing on the present subject in two respects,—both distinct from the idea that they were in themselves an expiation for sin, and both tending to confirm the argument which has been stated in this chapter.

(*a.*) One is, that they may be regarded as a proof that an atonement by blood was early contemplated in the Divine arrangements, and as designed to transmit the knowledge of the original purpose to distant times and lands.

(*b.*) The other is, that they may be regarded as expressing the deep conviction of the human mind itself that an atonement by blood is necessary in order to expiate human guilt. For, even if it is

admitted that they owed their origin to a Divine appointment, on no other supposition than this can it be presumed that an arrangement so inexplicable in itself as that of shedding the blood of an innocent animal for human guilt, would have so commended itself to mankind as to cause it to be perpetuated from age to age and diffused from land to land. Thus understood, the fact that such sacrifices were kept up *does* express the deep conviction of the mind of man that nothing but such a sacrifice could expiate transgression,—that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission.’

These facts also confirm the remark before made,—that on no one subject has the belief of mankind been more universally expressed than on this, that the shedding of blood is necessary to expiate sin. Abel, the second-born of man, leads his sacrifice to the altar, ‘the firstling of his flock,’ and pours out its blood. Why does he do it, unless as expressing his conviction that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission’? Abraham, the ‘father of the faithful,’ approaches the altar which he had himself reared, and raises the knife, as he believes at the command of God, to pierce the heart of his own son. Why does he do this, except as expressing the deep conviction of his soul that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission’? The ancient Jew offered the morning and the evening sacrifice as proof of his deep conviction that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission.’ Thus, too, it was in the Greek, the Roman, and the Babylonian temples. There thousands of victims bled, all to appease the anger and propitiate the favour of the gods, and all pro-

claiming the deep conviction of the worshippers that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' So with the worshippers on the banks of the Ganges and the Senegal; so with the Mexicans and the Peruvians; so with the Caffrarians and the islanders of the South Sea,—all offering bloody sacrifices, and all thus proclaiming their deep conviction that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' Thus also the Brahmin, who lacerates his flesh or walks on nails that fill his shoes with blood, proclaims his deep conviction that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' So the Christian, also, everywhere and in every age, proclaims the same opinion. He incorporates it in his creed; he diffuses it through his hymns of praise; he makes it the burden of his prayers and his thanksgiving; he lays it at the foundation of all his hopes of heaven that such a sacrifice of blood was necessary, and that such a sacrifice has been made: thus he proclaims to the world *his* belief that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' Men conscious of guilt rush to bloody altars. They come leading up the lamb, the goat, and the bullock for sacrifice. They come with prisoners of war, with pure virgins selected for sacrifice, with their own children, and offer them all to the gods to appease their wrath and to propitiate their favour,—under the influence of the deep conviction of the human mind that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' The infidel is alone. The skeptic doubts, when the nations believe. The deist sets himself against the general sentiment of mankind, and holds to a scheme of salvation which is at war with all that man has expressed of the

wants of the race. The Christian accords with the universal sentiment as expressed in sacrifices and blood-offerings. He believes that that sentiment is right; that it is true that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' He adds this only, as the peculiar article of his faith, *that such a sacrifice has been made on the cross.* He looks away from Jewish altars and from idol temples to Calvary. There bleeds the Lamb,—the Lamb of God. There flows from his veins blood so pure, so rich, so free, that no other sacrifice is needed; and as, by the eye of faith, he sees the life of that victim ebb away, his spirit, before troubled by the remembrance of guilt, becomes calm; God, before dreaded, becomes a reconciled Friend; the grave, so fearful to him before, loses its terror; and, though a sinner, he now looks calmly on to the eternal world; for through that blood there is 'remission.'

VI. The only other method in which, as was suggested on p. 162, the salvation of a sinner could be secured without an atonement, would be by a process of restoration in regard to moral evils,—a recuperative process, similar to the healing of diseases in the human body.

Of this, it is only necessary to make the following suggestions:—

(a.) The course of things in the world has not been such as to show that there is any such tendency, or any such law, on which reliance can be placed in restoring men to God. There certainly has been no *universal* tendency of that kind.

(b.) The healing of the diseases of the body is in a great measure an *external* operation, or is accom-

plished, as we have seen, to a great extent by an outward and independent arrangement in the *materia medica* of the world; and, whatever recuperative power there may be in nature, it would not be safe to rely on this wholly, nor is it thus relied on. There is, in fact, an independent and outside arrangement to teach us that we should not rely on it.

(c.) In regard to morals, men do not rely on any such recuperative tendencies in the moral system. There are extended arrangements for recalling to the path of duty those who have gone astray; for appealing to their interests, their sense of right, their prospects for the future; for making use of the influence of parents, teachers, friends, in order to recover the erring and the guilty. No man in whose child there are observed tendencies to vice and dissipation regards it as sufficient to rely on the recuperative tendencies in his mind; no one fails to use all the outward means in his power to recover him to the paths of virtue. If all these means, therefore, fail, there is a necessity for an atonement.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT.

IN considering the nature of the atonement, it is important to *detach* from it certain ideas which have been sometimes supposed to belong to it, or to show what it is *not*. Whatever difficulty there may be in showing what it *is*, there is, in many respects, much less difficulty in showing what it is not and cannot be.

It is not necessary, in doing this, to examine the views which have prevailed at different times on the subject, or to attempt to confute any of the doctrines which have been held. This would turn us aside too far from the main inquiry, and is in no way necessary to a proper view of the question, What is accomplished by the atonement? Those who may feel disposed to prosecute the inquiry in respect to the views which have been entertained on the subject may consult the following works,—viz: Die Christliche Lehre v. d. Versöhnung in ihrer geschichtl. Entwickl. v. d. ältesten Zeit bis auf die neueste. Dr. Fried. Chr. Bauer, *Tübing.* 1838. Die Lehre d. Kirche vom Tode Jesu in d. ersten drei Jahrh. vollständig u. m. bes. Berücksichtigung d. Lehre v. d. stellvertretenden Genugthuung. K. Bähr, *Salzbach*, 1832. A summary of the historical views contained in

these volumes, and a general statement of the views which have prevailed in the Church on the subject, may be found in an article, founded on these works, in the Presbyterian Quarterly Review, vol. ii. pp. 246-280.

In reference to the *negative* part of the subject, or as showing what the atonement does *not do*, or what cannot be considered as entering into its nature, the following remarks may be made:—

(1.) The atonement does not change God. It does not make him in any sense a different Being from what he was before the atonement was made. It is not held, and it cannot be held, that God was, before the atonement was made, severe, stern, and inexorable, and that he has been *made* mild and forgiving by the death of the Redeemer. It is not held, and cannot be held, that he was indisposed originally to show mercy, and that he has been *bought over* to mercy, or that such an influence has been exerted on him by the atonement as to make him now *willing* to do what he was indisposed to do before.

It has been indeed supposed, and perhaps is still by many persons, that this is implied in the atonement; and it cannot be denied that, in the representations made by the friends of the atonement, such views have been held on the subject, and such language has been employed, as to lay the foundation for this supposition. It cannot, moreover, be denied that language is sometimes employed which would imply that it is supposed that there is a difference, in important respects, between the Father and the Son;—that the Father is stern, exacting, and severe; that he is disposed to punish rather

than to pardon; that he is more zealous for maintaining his law and for executing justice than he is for showing mercy; that he is rather a just than a benevolent Being; and that the manifestation of *mercy* has its origin in the Son of God and not in the Father; or, in other words, that the leading attribute in the Saviour is *mercy*, the leading attribute in the Father is *justice*. Under this view, the Son of God is looked upon as amiable and mild; the Father as stern, cold, and repellant. Nor can it be denied that occasion has been furnished for *this* representation even in the poetry still used in the Church.

The following stanzas from Dr. Watts, in so common use in the Churches, will illustrate this idea:—

“ Rich were the drops of Jesus’ blood,
 That calm’d his frowning face,
 That sprinkled o’er the burning throne
 And turn’d the wrath to grace.”

Here the obvious representation undoubtedly is that God was originally stern, angry, and unforgiving, and that he has been *made* mild and forgiving by the ‘blood’ which ‘*calmed* his frowning face’ and ‘*turned the wrath to grace.*’

So also the following:—

“ Thy hands, dear Jesus, were not arm’d
 With a revenging rod;
 No hard commission to perform,—
 The vengeance of a God.
 But all was mercy, all was mild,
 And wrath forsook the throne,
 When Christ on the kind errand came
 And brought salvation down.”

In such language as this, while something may be set down to *mere* poetry and to the overflowing emotions of gratitude to the Saviour for the part which he has performed in the work of redemption, it is undoubtedly implied, by the fair interpretation of the language, that a *change* has been produced in God by the work of the atonement; that in some way a Being before stern, severe, and *angry* has been *made* mild, forgiving, and kind.

It cannot be necessary to prove at any considerable length that this cannot be a true representation.

It would undoubtedly be a valid objection to the doctrine—an objection which would prevent its general reception in the world as a doctrine of revelation—if it were implied that *any* change has been produced in God by the atonement. Men would not, could not, receive such a doctrine; for there is nothing more deeply and indelibly engraven on our nature, and nothing more abundantly affirmed in the Bible, than that God is unchangeable. The *effect* of any such representation of the doctrine of the atonement as that it implies that a change has been produced in God, that he has been bought over to mercy, that he has been in the literal sense *appeased* or *made* merciful and forgiving by the atonement, would not only be to lead men to reject the doctrine, but the book which taught it; and it cannot be doubted that all such representations, and all statements of the doctrine which border on such representations, tend to promote, among large classes of men, infidelity. It would be impossible to commend such a doctrine to the mass of mankind, or to

vindicate a book as a revelation in which this doctrine was taught.

The true doctrine on this point may be expressed in the following specifications:—

(a.) God *is* unchangeable. In him there is no ‘variableness, neither shadow of turning.’ He is ‘the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.’ He is in no respect whatever a different Being now from what he was before the atonement was made; and he will always *be* the same under all the circumstances which may occur in the universe. His nature is the same; his attributes are the same; the principles of his administration are the same; his love is the same; his justice is the same. He is no more disposed to show mercy now than he was before the atonement was made; he would be no less disposed if we could suppose that, from any cause, the efficacy of the atonement should be exhausted. The welfare of the universe depends on the fact that God is unchangeable; for the very moment that the idea should be admitted that he has changed or could change, all confidence in the stability of the universe would be gone; all confidence in *him*, his truth, his justice, his mercy, would cease forever. Dismay would spread over heaven and earth if it were announced that God had changed or could change; for what confidence could angels or men then repose in a Being who might still indeed have almighty power, but power under the direction of no certain rule?

(b.) While it is true that God is an unchangeable Being, it is also true that he may consistently do that in some circumstances which he could not do in others. He may consistently grant a farmer a

harvest if he is industrious and if he ploughs and sows his ground, when it would be inconsistent for him to interpose by miracle and to grant him a harvest if he spent the time of sowing and ingathering in a place of low dissipation. He may consistently grant health to a man who is temperate, when it would be in every way inconsistent for him to interpose by miracle and confer it upon him if he should violate all the laws of health and pursue the very course which would tend to engender disease. He may consistently confer wealth on the merchant who consults the just laws of trade, and who sends his ships to distant ports from which there would be a prospect of a fair return, when it would not be consistent to grant it if his vessels were suffered to lie unemployed in the port. And he may consistently conduct the mariner across the ocean if he watches his compass and adjusts his sails and observes his chart, when it would not be consistent to do it if by indolence, ignorance, or intemperance he neglected all. So it may be in the matter of salvation. The unchangeable God *may* consistently offer pardon to a sinner now that an atonement has been made, though there would be insuperable difficulties in such an offer if *no* atonement had been provided.

(c.) The essential idea in the atonement is, not that God was originally stern and inexorable and that he has been made mild and merciful by the atonement, but that the atonement itself has its foundation in his willingness to pardon; not that he has been *made* benevolent by the atonement, but that he was originally so disposed to show mercy that he was willing to stoop to any sacrifice but that

of truth and justice in order that he might *show* his willingness to pardon the guilty. He gave his Son to die, not that he might be *bought over* to love, but as the *expression* of love. This is undoubtedly the doctrine of the Bible:—"God so LOVED THE WORLD that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) No other representation than this occurs in the Bible; and, whatever objection there may be in the minds of any to the doctrine of the atonement, no objection can be based on the idea that any change has been produced in the Divine mind.

(2.) It is no part of the doctrine of the atonement that the Divine nature, in the person of the Saviour, suffered.

In regard to this, the following remarks may be made:—

(a.) It has never been so demonstrated that this is the doctrine of the Bible as to lead the Church at large to embrace it; and it is *not* the doctrine of the Christian Church. It is a circumstance also of much importance that this has never been charged on Christianity by the rejecters of revelation as one of its teachings. Indeed, it may be doubted whether such a charge has ever been made by any infidel,—a fact that could not have occurred if the doctrine were a part of the obvious teaching of the Bible, or if it were easy to make out the doctrine from the Bible by any fair rule of interpretation. No doctrine would have been more certain to expose Christianity to the attacks of its enemies than this; and we may be certain that the keen-sighted rejecters of revela-

tion would have availed themselves of it if such a doctrine were found there as an unanswerable objection to the Bible. As a matter of fact, Christianity cannot be held to be responsible for such a doctrine, for it has never been an admitted doctrine of the Church, and no infidel could convince the world that this is, by any fair interpretation, the true doctrine of the Scriptures.

(b.) It is not *necessary*, as we shall see in the progress of this discussion, to hold this in order to a proper view of the atonement. If the doctrine of the atonement were that the same amount of suffering must be endured by him who makes it which would have been borne by those for whom he died if the penalty of the law had been inflicted on them, it would be difficult indeed to avoid the conclusion that the Divine nature must have suffered; since otherwise it is inconceivable that the same *amount* of suffering could have been endured in the few hours in which the Saviour suffered which would have been borne by the redeemed themselves in the world of woe forever. But no just view of the atonement requires us to hold that the same *amount* of suffering was endured by the Redeemer which would have been endured if the penalty of the law had been inflicted on those for whom he died.

(c.) This doctrine cannot be believed. It would be impossible that a professed revelation should make its way in the world, or should commend itself to the mass of mankind, in which the doctrine was found that *God had endured mortal pangs*. Such a statement would so impinge on all the conceptions which men entertain of the Divine nature, that it

could not, and would not, be believed. God cannot suffer and die. If there is any thing of which the human mind is perfectly confident, it is of the truth of this statement; and if it were necessary that the Divine nature should suffer in order that an atonement should be made, it is clear that it would have been forever impossible.

God cannot die; and yet, in all the representations which we have of the atonement, the statement is that it was made by the *death* of the victim. It is the life that is offered; the sacrifice is made by the shedding of the blood of the victim, for the life is in the blood; it is the blood of Christ which redeems and saves us; it is the 'blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin;' it is by the blood of Christ that we are redeemed. (See Romans iii. 25, v. 9; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 12, xiii. 12; Rev. i. 5.) It will be shown in the subsequent consideration of this subject that the *blood* or *life* of the victim has a value in the work of the atonement proportionate to the dignity or rank of the victim, and that, therefore, in the work of the atonement, and as a part of it, the death of the Redeemer has all the value which it would have on the supposition that the Divine nature suffered.

(3.) It is not implied in the doctrine of the atonement that the same *kind* of suffering was endured which would have been by those for whom it was made.

It cannot, indeed, be denied that this view has been, and is still, entertained by some who believe in the doctrine of the atonement; and it would be difficult to avoid this if it were an essential part of

the doctrine that Christ endured the literal penalty of the law; for then the atonement would require the same *kind* of suffering, as well as the same *amount* of suffering, which the law demanded as a penalty for its violation.

But in reference to this view of the atonement the following considerations are decisive:—

(a.) The essential idea in the doctrine of the atonement is that of *substitution* or *vicariousness*. If the doctrine of substitution is admitted at all, it would seem to be most probable that it would extend to the kind of suffering and to the amount of suffering, as well as to the sufferer himself. For the same reason that it is admissible in reference to one of these points, it must be admissible in reference to the others also; and it cannot be assumed that there is a substitution in one of them only, or that the same principle may not be extended to all that enters into the notion of the atonement.

(b.) It is nowhere affirmed in the Scriptures that the Redeemer endured the same *kind* of suffering which they for whom he died would have endured if they had borne the penalty of the law in their own persons. It is, indeed, abundantly affirmed that he died for sinners; that he bore the sin of many; that the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of all; that he was made a curse for us; that he was wounded for our transgressions and was bruised for our iniquities. But it is nowhere affirmed that the sufferings which he endured in behalf of the guilty were of the same nature as those which the guilty themselves endure for their own crimes; and it would be

impossible for man to embrace such a doctrine if it were affirmed.

(c.) It would be impossible for a substitute to endure the same sufferings which the sinner himself will endure in the future world for his sins. There are sufferings caused by sin which belong only to the consciousness of guilt, and these sufferings cannot be transferred to another. The sin itself cannot be transferred; and, as it is impossible to detach the suffering from the consciousness of guilt, it follows that a substitute cannot endure the same kind of suffering which the sinner would himself endure. Remorse of conscience, for example,—one of the keenest sources of suffering to the guilty, and which will be a most fearful part of the penalty of the law in the future world,—*cannot* be transferred. I *cannot* be made to feel remorse for what another has done. I may feel deep regret that it was done; I may feel shame, mortification, and humiliation from the fact that it was done by one who is intimately connected with me; I may suffer deeply in person, in property, or in my social position, on account of the offence; but I *cannot* be made to feel remorse. There is no way conceivable by which this feeling can be transferred from the guilty to the innocent. To transfer it is not an object of *power*; for, by the eternal and unchangeable constitution of things, it is attached only to the crime and the criminal; and, as it is impossible that the guilt should be transferred, so it is impossible that the remorse which belongs to it should be made over to another.

It follows, therefore, that, whatever may enter into an atonement, it cannot be implied that the sub-

stitute endured the same *kind* of sufferings which the guilty would themselves endure.

(4.) It is not meant by the atonement that the same *amount* of suffering was endured which would have been endured by the guilty themselves.

It is not to be denied that it has been maintained that Christ *did* actually endure the same amount of suffering which the elect would have suffered if they had borne the penalty of the law themselves. This, indeed, has been held to be essential to the very nature of the atonement; and the whole conception of the atonement, according to this view, is that it is a mere *transfer* of guilt and suffering from the guilty to the innocent.

But the objections to this view are so insuperable that it is remarkable that the opinion has ever been held.

(a.) It is impossible that this should have occurred unless the Divine nature actually suffered. If that were so, then it might be conceivable that an amount of suffering might have been endured in the *time* during which the Redeemer was on the cross which would be equal to all that those for whom he died would endure if in their own persons they bore the penalty of the law forever; for, if an *infinite* Being could thus suffer, the very fact that he is *infinite* would make such a supposition possible. But on no other supposition can it be conceived that, in the hours in which the Redeemer hung on the cross, or in the whole length of a human life, an amount of suffering could have been endured which would be equal to what countless millions could endure in the world of woe if prolonged to eternity.

(b.) The supposition that such an amount of suffering is necessary, is contrary to the essential notion of an atonement. An atonement is, properly, an arrangement by which the *literal* infliction of the penalty due to sin may be avoided; it is something which may be *substituted* in the place of punishment; it is that which will answer the same end which would be secured by the literal infliction of the penalty of the law. It is not a commercial transaction,—a matter of debt and payment, of profit and loss. It pertains to law, to government, to holiness; not to literal debt and payment. Sin is crime, not debt; it is guilt, not a failure in a pecuniary obligation. The atonement pertains to love, and mercy, and truth, and kindness, as well as to justice. It looks benignantly on a world of sinners; it regards a race of offenders with compassion; it seeks to alleviate and lessen suffering; and it is not, therefore, the cold and stern business of paying a debt,—of meeting the mere demands of justice and of law. It seeks to bring back wanderers by the consideration that God loves them,—that they may be forgiven,—that salvation is free for all men if they choose to avail themselves of it. It is real and not imaginary *salvation*. It proceeds on the supposition that there is *gain* to the universe by the atonement, and that it will lessen the amount of misery; not that it is a mere transfer of pain from the guilty to the innocent.

(c.) If the same amount of suffering were endured by him who makes the atonement which would have been by the guilty themselves, it is obvious that there would have been no *gain* to the universe;

no augmented happiness, no diminution of suffering. The simple and the sole account of the matter would be, that there had been a *transfer* of just so much suffering from the guilty to the innocent; a setting over of so much *debt* from him who owed it to him who did not. There might, indeed, be benevolence in him who assumed the debt or who endured the pain, but there would be no diminution of the actual suffering endured in the universe; and it would be impossible to answer the question which would be asked, whether it is *desirable* that punishment should be transferred from the guilty to the innocent; whether it would not be better, if the same amount of suffering is to be endured, that it should be borne by him who does deserve it than by him who does not. This question it would be difficult to answer even if the substitute were wholly voluntary in assuming the suffering in the case: it becomes wholly impossible to answer it if it is imposed upon the sufferer and exacted of him.

(*d.*) It is clear that, if such were the nature of the atonement, there could be no *mercy* in the case. When a debt is paid, there is no forgiveness; when a penalty is endured, there is no mercy. It is an affair of strict and inexorable justice. In the case of one who should be willing to pay the debt or to endure the suffering, there may be the highest benevolence; but there is no mercy exhibited by him to whom the debt is paid or the penalty of whose law has been borne. If it is a pecuniary transaction, it is a matter of indifference to him to whom the debt is owing whether it is paid by him

who contracted it, or by a friend; and in a case where it is supposed that the exact punishment due to sin is borne by another, whatever kindness there may be in him who endures it, there is no mercy in him who has exacted the penalty, though he has accepted the offering made by the substitute. The full penalty has been exacted, and all the demands in the case have been complied with. It would have been kindness, indeed, in an Egyptian to have come in voluntarily and aided the oppressed and burdened Hebrew to furnish the 'tale of bricks;' but there would have been no kindness or compassion evinced by the taskmaster who had appointed the task, for the whole demand would have been complied with. So far as *he* who performed the work was concerned, and so far as the burdened Hebrew was concerned, it would have been a transaction of mere law and justice; so far as the taskmaster was concerned, there would have been in the case neither mercy nor compassion.

Now, it need scarcely be said that this view is entirely contrary to all the representations of the atonement in the Scriptures. Nothing is more plain than that the whole transaction there is represented as one of mercy; that it is designed to illustrate the love, as well as the justice, of God.

If it should be said that there was mercy in the gift of a Saviour, and that so far as that is concerned the transaction is one of mercy, though so far as the law is concerned the transaction is one of justice, it may be replied that this is not the representation of the Bible. The idea of mercy pervades it throughout. It is not only mercy in providing an atone-

ment; it is mercy to the sinner. There is mercy in the case. There is love. There is more than a mere exaction of the penalty. There is more than a transfer. There is a lessening of suffering. There is a substitution of a less amount of pain as actually endured in the place of the pain that was threatened. There is an actual *gain* of happiness to the universe; not a mere transfer of so much pain from the guilty to the innocent. This representation is apparent everywhere in the Scriptures; and no one can rise from the perusal of the New Testament without the impression that the scheme is one that lays the foundation for gratitude and thanksgiving as an exercise of mercy in the largest sense, and that the songs of the redeemed in heaven are not based on the idea that it is a transaction of mere justice, or on the idea that it is a mere commercial transaction,—a *quid pro quo*,—but on the idea that a new provision has been introduced into the government of the universe, by which suffering may be DIMINISHED.

(5.) It is not meant by the atonement that Christ endured the literal penalty of the law.

The penalty of the law, as we have seen, is what is threatened or inflicted by the lawgiver as an expression of his sense of the value of the law and of the evil of violating it. The penalty may be measured or determined (*a*) by an actual *statement* on his part of what he will inflict, or what the violation of the law deserves, or (*b*) by what actually *comes upon the offender* under his administration as the consequence of violating the law. In other words, we may learn what is the penalty of the law

from revelation, or from observation of the actual course of events, or from both combined. The actual threatening may or may not cover the whole ground; and what the penalty *is*, may be learned partly from the statement, and partly from observation. As a matter of fact, we ascertain, in a great measure, what the penalty of violating the Divine law is, from observation. Thus, we learn what is the penalty of intemperance, partly from the previous statement of what *will* be the consequences, and partly from an actual observation of the evils which come upon the drunkard. To know what the real penalty *is*, we must look at all those consequences on the body and the soul; on the property and the peace of the drunkard; on his family and his reputation; on the effects in *delirium tremens*, in his wretched death, in his dishonoured memory, and in the woes endured forever. All these, and not a part of them, are designed to express the Lawgiver's sense of the value of the law and the evil of its violation. To endure, therefore, the penalty of the law in the case of intemperance is to bear *all* the evils which it actually brings on the offender in this world and in the world to come. If a substitute, therefore, should endure the literal penalty of the law, all must be endured which would actually come upon the offender himself.

It should be added, moreover, that a penalty is what is denounced against the offender himself and no other. The law utters no threat against the innocent; it inflicts no suffering on those who obey it, which can properly be regarded as punishment. The crime and the penalty are in the same line;

they pertain to the same person; they cannot be separated except as the penalty shall be removed by pardon or substitution; they are not shifting and vacillating; they are not capable of being transferred to different persons. They can no more be separated than the qualities of colour, ductility, malleability, or weight, for example, can be separated from gold and transferred to silver or lead.

If we look, then, at what actually *follows* from the infraction of the Divine law, and what is, therefore, a part of the penalty, we shall see that there *are* sufferings which could not by any possibility be transferred to a substitute. They are of such a nature that they always adhere to the offender himself; and it is absolutely certain, therefore, that the Redeemer did not endure them on the cross.

(*a.*) Remorse of conscience is manifestly a part of the penalty of the law; that is, it is a portion of what the law inflicts as expressing the sense which the Lawgiver entertains of the value of the law and of the evil of its violation. But this is connected only with the personal violation of the law. It is never found in an innocent bosom. It never springs up from the performance of a right action. It can in no way be connected with the consciousness of innocence. It has all the marks of being a mere Divine appointment designed to furnish evidence to the soul itself that what has been done is wrong, and to be a measure of the wrong as it is estimated by the lawgiver. There is no more certain proof that there *is* a moral government, and that God *is* a lawgiver, than is furnished by the fact that the mind is made to judge of the evil of its own doings, and that this

silent but terrible infliction comes upon the violator of law through the action of the mind itself. It is an internal arrangement, connected with the very workings of the soul, which could have been originated only by the Maker of the soul, and who intends that sin shall always be punished.

Yet it is certain that the Redeemer never suffered remorse of conscience. In the history of his life there is not a hint that can be tortured into evidence that he did; and in the nature of the case it was impossible that he should. For remorse *cannot* be attached to innocence. It is the result and companion of guilt, and it **CANNOT** be transferred from the guilty to the innocent. I may weep for the sin of others; I may be involved in calamity on account of their guilt; I may hang my head in shame when one who is closely connected with me has been guilty of crime; but I can never be made to feel *remorse* on account of the guilt of any other being but myself. It is not an object of power to make this feeling spring up in the mind of any other than the offender himself. And if this is true, then it is certain that there is *one* portion of the penalty of the law which the Redeemer did not endure in making an atonement.

(b.) Equally certain is it that he did not endure eternal death.

It will be admitted, by those who believe in the necessity of an atonement, that eternal death was the penalty of the law. So far, therefore, as they are concerned, this may be assumed; and this is all that is necessary to be assumed in considering the point now before us.

Assuming that the penalty of the law is eternal death, then it is plain, as a matter of simple fact, that the penalty was *not* endured in making the atonement. Fearful and awful as the sufferings of the Redeemer were, they were *not* eternal. They were closed in a few hours; and by no possibility of fiction can it be imagined that they were eternal. If it should be said that they were *equal* in amount to the eternal sufferings of those for whom he died,—whatever might be true on that question,—yet as a matter of fact they were not eternal in duration. But, if the punishment of the wicked will be eternal, it is clear that that is a part of the penalty of the law. The lengthening out of the duration of the suffering to eternity is not a circumstance which has been added *since* the law was broken as supplementary to the original threatening, and it is not that which springs up from the mere nature of the case independently of the Divine appointment. No man can possibly hold that the Redeemer endured *eternal* sorrow; and no man, therefore, who believes that the penalty of the law is eternal death, can consistently maintain that he endured the literal penalty of the law.

(6.) It cannot be supposed, as has been before shown, that the sufferings of the Redeemer were *equal* to all the sufferings which would have been endured by those for whom he died if they had borne the penalty of the law in their own persons. It is not possible to believe this unless it be maintained that the Divine nature suffered; for on no other supposition can it be held that the agonies endured by the Redeemer on the cross—intense as they were—could have *equalled*, in any proper sense,

what would be endured even by a single sufferer if prolonged forever.

II. Laying these things, therefore, out of view, as being either in themselves impossible, or as not necessary in any proper conception of the atonement, I proceed to the second and main inquiry, —what the atonement *is*. Probably this is the most difficult question which ever comes before the human mind.

It may be observed, at the outset, that there may be an error in supposing that the atonement was confined to one thing, or that only one result was contemplated by it and accomplished by it.

If the remarks made in the preceding chapters are well founded, then it is manifest that there were many things which it was necessary to accomplish by an atonement, or many ends to be reached. We have seen that there are numerous difficulties in a human administration in reference to pardon; that it is not one thing only which grows out of the commission of crime which embarrasses a human government, but that there are many things to be provided for in order that pardon may be dispensed consistently with the honour of the law and the welfare of the community. We have seen (ch. iv.) that in an atonement it is necessary to secure the following objects:—the honour of the law; the proper impression in regard to the evil of sin as contemplated by the law; the reformation and future good conduct of him who is pardoned; the safety of the community; and a fair representation, so far as the atonement may bear on it, of the character of the lawgiver.

The inquiry now is, What *is* the atonement in reference to these points?

As preliminary to this inquiry, it may be observed that, in the arrangements of Providence, *many* ends are often accomplished by one thing, and that, in ascertaining what that one thing is intended for, we must take in *all* the ends which are actually secured by it. Thus, if we should ask what is the purpose for which *light* was created, we should greatly err, and should obtain but a very imperfect view of the objects contemplated by its creation, if we should fix our attention on *seeing* and should infer that that was the only thing contemplated by it. Important as that is, and undeniable as it is that that was an important end contemplated in the formation of light, yet there are numerous other ends known to us, and perhaps many which are unknown, that were equally contemplated in its creation. It is the origin of colours everywhere; it is somehow identified with warmth as it comes from the great source of light; it is indispensable in the development of seeds and plants; it exerts an important influence on the growth of animals; it becomes a guide to the mariner in crossing the ocean; it diffuses health and vigor over the world. If, then, we were asked what purposes light accomplishes in the universe, we should greatly err if we supposed that the whole answer would be comprised in saying that it is for the purpose of seeing. We have given a correct answer so far as it goes; but we have embraced in it but a small part of the real purposes for which light was made. The same principles would be found, perhaps, to run through all the works of

God,—that he accomplishes many purposes by each one of the things which he has made, and that, although we may find a beautiful and wise adaptation to a particular end, we should not infer, therefore, that that was the only end contemplated. A muscle, a bone, a nerve, a valve in an artery, a petal of a flower, a leaf on a tree, a drop of rain or of dew, may each be adapted to perform many functions; and to understand *why* they were made it would be necessary to take in all that is actually accomplished by them. So it may be in regard to the atonement; and we may greatly err in supposing that one thing and no more was contemplated by it; perhaps in supposing that it referred to one world and no more.

There are some preliminary questions which meet us here in reference to the atonement, and which enter vitally into the subject,—questions which a skeptic asks, and which a philosophic mind will ask. They are such as these:—Of what use can suffering be in such a case? How can this make it proper that God should show mercy when he could not otherwise do it? And especially of what value in such a case is the death of a victim? Can it be supposed that this would be pleasing to God, or make him any more disposed to show mercy than he would be if no life were offered?

These questions are natural, but they are, it must be confessed, not easily answered. If they could have been suggested beforehand,—that is, if we could place ourselves in the order of things back of any suffering,—probably we should say, as we would in regard to sin, that there could be no conceivable

ends to be accomplished by suffering which would make it proper that it should be permitted to come into the system. We should suppose that a holy and benevolent God would never allow either sin, suffering, or death to enter the universe. We should deem this so certain that no mere reasoning could convince us that this would ever occur. But if we place ourselves in advance of that position, and look at facts, we shall find that not only has suffering been allowed to come into the system, but that it has been made to act a very important part in developing the Divine purposes. We should have said that God *would* not accomplish any of his purposes by suffering; we find that, contrary to all these anticipations, he *has* accomplished many of his designs by means of it.

Particularly the following things are true.

(a.) Suffering *as such* acts an important part in the development of God's plans, in the destiny of individuals. I mean now not suffering as *deserved* or as *punishment*; suffering not directly in the line of an offence and as a regular and perceived consequence of guilt, but suffering *outside* of punishment; suffering that cannot be regarded as punishment; suffering that comes upon those who cannot, in respect to any conceivable reason for its infliction, be regarded as *guilty*. Thus the sufferings which come upon us as the consequences of the errors or crimes of guilty parents; those which are the result of our connections with others, though we are in no way blameworthy for their conduct; those which descend from generation to generation as the fruit of the sin and folly of an ancestor; those which involve whole

communities in woe as the result of the carelessness or sinfulness of some one occupying a place of trust or responsibility,—as the captain of a vessel, or the commander of an army,—show that there *is* a purpose contemplated by suffering outside of the proper notion of punishment, and as exercising an important agency where no guilt, so far as that particular suffering is concerned, exists in those who are affected by it.

(b.) A considerable part of the blessings which we enjoy in this life comes to us through suffering. They are the direct result of what may in some sense be called *sacrifices* on our part; that is, we have *sacrificed* ease and comfort, and given ourselves to wearisome toil, in order to procure those blessings; and we should not have possessed them if we had not submitted to the sacrifice of time and ease and present happiness. The property that is gained by the laborious cultivation of the earth, by digging in mines, by perils on the ocean, by exposure in foreign and pestilential climes, comes to us as the result of such sacrifices and sufferings. But, besides this, not a small part of the most valuable and valued traits of our character is the fruit of *suffering*; of the trials which we have experienced in early years; of the sickness and bereavements which have been our lot; of the disappointments that have come upon us in our plans of life. We should have supposed *à priori* that it would have been otherwise; that, if a benevolent God *meant* to bless us, he would do it without resorting to *such* a medium. But it has not been as we should have anticipated; and, if we could now detach from the sum-total of what

goes to make up our character all that has come to us as the direct or indirect result of personal suffering, we might be surprised to find how meagre in amount, and how inferior in quality, the remainder would be.

(c.) Equally true is it that a very large part of the blessings which we enjoy has come to us as the result of the sufferings of others. To the sufferings and sacrifices of the friends of liberty in all ages and lands we owe the liberty which we now enjoy; and all that has ever been endured in the camp or the field, all the ills of cold, and hunger, and peril, and fatigue that have marked the progress of liberty in the world, have contributed to secure and perpetuate that which we now enjoy. To the sufferings and sacrifices of others we owe the enjoyment of the rights of conscience; the privilege of worshipping God with none to molest us; all the peace and consolation which religion imparts in a world of sadness and sorrow; all the support which it gives on the bed of death. We owe it to the early Christian martyrs that religion survived in the times when imperial power sought to crush it; and all that has been endured under the Inquisition, or in the times of the Reformation, has entered as an essential element into religious freedom now. Religion has made its way in the world in the midst of the fires of persecution; and while it would seem that God *might* have imparted those blessings without the sufferings of martyrdom, and while it would have appeared probable that he *would* thus do it, still, as a matter of fact, there is not a blessing of religion which we enjoy which is not the fruit of the suffer-

ings endured on the rack and at the stake. And since, as a great rule in the Divine administration, this is the way in which we receive blessings from the hand of God, it is manifest that there is some reason for making those blessings conditional on suffering, or in making this a great principle in the Divine method of dealing with man. In temporal matters, men do not complain of this arrangement; and why should we not be willing to admit that there may be equal wisdom in the method by which the highest blessings of this world and the next shall be conferred on men? We receive the blessings of liberty gratefully as the result of the toils and sacrifices of patriots: why should we not thus receive the blessings of redemption? Patriots have been satisfied if by their sufferings they could secure the liberty of their country: why should we not suppose that the Redeemer would be 'satisfied' (Isa. liii. 11) if by his sufferings he could redeem a fallen world?

With these preliminary remarks, I proceed to specify more particularly what the atonement *is*, or what are the ends which it is designed to accomplish.

(1.) *The atonement is something substituted in the place of the penalty of the law, which will answer the same ends as the punishment of the offender himself would. It is instead of his punishment. It is something which will make it proper for a lawgiver to suspend or remit the literal execution of the penalty of the law, because the object or end of that penalty has been secured, or because something has been substituted for that which will answer the same purpose. In other words, there are certain ends proposed by*

the appointment of a penalty in case of a violation of the law; and if these ends are secured, then the punishment may be remitted and the offender may be pardoned. That which will secure these ends is an *atonement*.

The thing aimed at—the result to be reached—is the remission of the penalty, or the manifestation of mercy to the guilty. It is not an *abstract* thing—a mere display of an attribute of the lawgiver—that is contemplated; but it is a practical work, in the pardon of the guilty, and in placing him in a condition *as if* he had not violated the law. The essential reason why this is done, is that God is merciful; the manifested reason is, that the same ends have been secured, so far as the design in the appointment of the penalty of the law is concerned, which would have been if the offender had been punished: in other words, mercy can now be manifested consistently with justice; for the act of pardon does not imply, by a fair construction, any disregard of the claims of justice or of the real interests of the community.

(a.) Mere *mercy* could be shown in any case; but, as we have seen, there are insuperable difficulties in all governments in the exercise of pardon without an atonement.

(b.) Mere *justice* could be shown by a rigid infliction of the penalty of the law in all cases whatsoever. It could be shown in a human government on earth; it could be shown in the Divine government in hell,—for God *could* consign every violator of his laws, under the most exact administration of justice, to the woes which sin deserves. But then, as we have seen, this would be attended with nume-

rous evils. It would impinge on the finer feelings of our nature. It would make a government harsh, severe, tyrannical,—an administration to be feared, not to be loved. It would violate principles which have been implanted by the Creator himself within us; for there is an arrangement in our constitution which shows that it was *contemplated* that mercy should enter largely into the course of things in the universe, and that the government of the universe should not be the exercise of mere stern, inexorable law.

The object of the atonement is the blending of the two. It is an arrangement by which one shall not be exercised at the expense of the other. In the ordinary course of things, and as affairs are actually administered among men, the two do *not* harmonize. One is sacrificed to the other. If mere justice is displayed, there is no mercy; if mere mercy, justice is sacrificed.

The atonement is an arrangement by which *both* may be manifested in reference to the case of the same individual, so that, while he is treated *as if* he had not sinned, there is no disregard of the claims of justice. Instead of exhibiting the attribute of stern justice in one case, thus disregarding all the laws of our nature which have been arranged with a view to the exercise of mercy, and of exhibiting the attribute of mercy in another, thus disregarding in like manner the laws of our nature which demand that justice should be done, the two meet together in reference to the same individual, or to any number of individuals who may be willing to accept of salvation at the hands of God.

The *means* by which this is proposed to be accomplished is by *substitution*: substitution in two senses,—(a) in the fact that the undeserved and voluntary sufferings of one are in the place of the deserved suffering of another, and (b) in the nature of the sufferings endured; that his sufferings shall not be the same in kind or degree which the sufferings of the guilty themselves would have been, but shall be of such a nature as to be a proper *equivalent* for them, or shall, in the circumstances of the case, answer the same ends which would have been accomplished by those sufferings.

The question now to be considered is, *whether there can be a substitution which will secure these ends.* This question involves the whole doctrine of the atonement, and the views which are entertained of the atonement will depend on the answer that shall be given to it. In relation to this question there are two inquiries, which must determine the whole matter:—Is such a substitution *admissible*? If admissible, would it answer the same purpose as the punishment of the guilty?

(a.) Is such a substitution *admissible*? That is, Can it be proper, in the administration of a government of law, to admit the principle that one who is innocent may suffer for the guilty, or that his sufferings may be substituted in the place of those due to the transgressor himself? The inquiry is not whether an innocent being may be *compelled* to suffer in the place of the guilty, or whether the punishment due to crime may be *transferred* from the guilty to the innocent, by the will of the lawgiver; for no one could defend either of these points. But the ques-

tion is, whether, in a case of proposed *voluntary* substitution, it is an admissible principle.

And here the following observations may be made.

1. It is an admitted principle in pecuniary transactions; for example, in the payment of a debt or fine. The law requires only that the debt or the fine shall be paid, and is wholly indifferent by whom it is done,—whether by the debtor himself or by a friend who chooses to pay it for him. In fact, the law makes numerous arrangements of this very nature, as in the case of ‘bail,’ and in ‘securities’ for the faithful performance of the duties of an office, even requiring that such bail and such securities shall be given by others, and exacting the forfeiture of him who becomes voluntary ‘bail’ or ‘security.’

2. The principle is admitted in case of a hostage. A hostage is “a person delivered to an enemy or hostile power, as a pledge to secure the performance of the conditions of a treaty or stipulations of any kind, and on the performance of which the person is to be released.”—*Webster*. The person who becomes a hostage is substituted in the place of the state that makes the treaty or stipulation,—since the whole state could not be made over for security, but the hostage who *is* made over is, in respect to rank or position, of so much *value* to the state that he becomes a guarantee that the contracting party will faithfully perform the conditions of the treaty. If he is a voluntary hostage, the act is an expression of his conviction that the state will perform the conditions of the treaty; and by whatever there is of

worth or dignity in his own rank and character, his becoming a hostage is of the nature of a pledge that it will do it. And in proportion to his dignity and worth he *becomes* a security that the treaty or stipulation will be executed; that is, the state will sooner execute the conditions than suffer any evil to befall him. If, however, the conditions of the treaty are *not* complied with, it is understood, and, indeed, is a part of the arrangement, that his life or liberty is forfeited. Such a forfeit would be, in fact, in the place of the punishment which might be inflicted on the state for its violation of the compact; and his sufferings, whatever they are, are a *substitution* for the punishment admitted to be due to the state itself, or which the injured party might justly bring upon the party that had violated the treaty. Thus, in the Roman history, Regulus, who had been delivered to the Carthaginians as a hostage, after being sent to Rome to persuade the Roman Senate to a certain course, under a pledge that if they would not do it he would return and die, and after having himself advised the Senate *not* to comply with the conditions proposed by the Carthaginians, voluntarily returned to Carthage and was put to death under the severest form of torture,—his sufferings and death being, in fact, *substituted* in the place of the vengeance which the Carthaginians would have wreaked upon Rome itself, if it could, as an expression of the sense entertained of the wrong which Rome had done.

3. As far as it will answer the end, or as far as it can be done, it seems to be a principle on which men do not hesitate to act, or where they do not

pause to inquire or not whether it is a principle that may be admitted, that one may take the place of another and be treated as he would be. Thus in the cases above alluded to, in a pecuniary transaction and of a hostage. So, too, in a case of drafting or conscription in an army. In such a case, all the requirements are met if one who is equally able-bodied, and otherwise equally well qualified for military service, becomes a substitute in the place of him who had been drafted into the service or who is called into it under the requirements of a conscription. There is no principle of military law which would forbid such a substitution, if voluntary; for all the demands of the law would be substantially complied with; that is, all the purposes contemplated by drafting or conscription would be secured. Thus, too, men do not suppose that there is any violation of a just principle in *offering* to become a substitute, or in *offering* to bear the effects of a certain course of conduct in their own persons. For example, in the history of Joseph, when Simeon had been retained as a hostage for the return of his brethren, and when Joseph had required that, as a proof that they were true men and not spies, their younger brother should be brought down to Egypt, and the aged Jacob hesitated about sending his younger son down with them, Judah plead with his father, and said, "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again." (Gen. xlii. 37.) And so again he said, "I will be surety for him: of my hand shalt thou require him. If I bring him not unto thee and set him before thee, *then let me bear the blame*

forever." (Gen. xliii. 9.) Here there was felt to be no impropriety in the *principle* of substitution. Judah did not suppose that it was in any way improper to propose it; the aged father did not object to it when it was proposed. The proposition was made as a pledge for the welfare of the favourite son; as committing Judah to his safe return; as a guarantee that all would be well; as expressing a willingness on his part that even his own two sons should be slain if he did not bring back Benjamin to his father; and as an expression of his own willingness to bear the blame in the case forever,—that is, to take upon himself all the consequences. The remark here is, that men act spontaneously on the principle involved in the doctrine of substitution, and that it is so much a matter of impulse, and spontaneity, and conscious propriety, that they do not even pause to consider whether it is or is not proper. In other words, there is something in human nature which lays the foundation for the propriety of the principle and leads men at once to act on it in all cases when it can be done. The notion of becoming a surety, a hostage, a pledge, by substituted toil, by suffering, or by a fine,—by devoting whatever there is in character, position, or influence as a security for another,—by bearing the sufferings or privations involved in a case of substitution,—or by voluntarily assuming the consequences of a certain course of conduct, as in the proposed case of Judah and the actual case of Regulus,—is one on which men act spontaneously and constantly.

4. If, therefore, a substitute would answer the end in *any* given case, it would seem to be a prin-

ciple that might be admitted to any extent whatever. If the sufferings which one might endure voluntarily in the place of another would, in fact, answer the same end which they would if inflicted on an offender himself, it is difficult to see why the principle might not be admitted in such a case as well as in the case of the payment of a debt, of 'bail,' of 'security' for the proper fulfilment of the duties of an office, of a drafted soldier, of a hostage, or in those instances in which men spontaneously take upon themselves the consequences of a certain course of conduct, or are willing that the 'blame' should fall upon themselves.

b. If the *principle* is admissible, the next question is whether a substitution in the place of the guilty *can be made* to answer the same ends which would be secured by the punishment of the guilty themselves. This question is now to be asked in view of the objects to be accomplished in the administration of law, or the ends contemplated in the penalty of the law. It is equivalent to asking whether as deep an impression can be produced of the value of law, and of the evils of the violation of the law, by such substituted sufferings as would be produced by the infliction of the penalty on the guilty; whether as much can be accomplished in securing the reformation and future good conduct of the offender; whether as much can be secured in deterring others from violating the law; and whether as much can be effected in securing the peace and good order of a community. In all the cases which have been referred to where the principle of substitution is admitted, it is obvious that the same ends are secured

by the substitution, which would be by the regular operations of the law. The question now is whether the same result can be secured by the substituted sufferings of the innocent in the place of the punishment of a violator of the laws of God.

(1.) If a sinner is punished in the world of woe, he will suffer there by enduring the penalty of the law; that is, as has been explained, his sufferings will be designed to show the sense entertained by God of the value of the law and the evil of violating it. Those sufferings must also, so far as that may operate at all in producing such an effect, be intended to deter others from disobedience by the certainty that punishment will follow disobedience, and by the intensity and duration of the punishment. These would be the effects in an individual case; they would be the results in any number of cases, in the *aggregate* of woe endured by the lost. And the effect would stop there. Those sufferings would not be designed to reform the offender himself or any of his suffering companions; for, apart from the consideration already urged that this is not, in any case, the proper end or result of punishment, it is clear that *that* could not be its design in a form of punishment that was to be eternal. The end to be reached, then, by substituted sufferings would be a representation of the sense entertained of the value of law and the evil of violating the law *equal* to that which would be produced if the punishment were inflicted on the guilty themselves.

(2.) If a sinner bears the penalty of the law himself, the impression produced on the universe at large by his individual sufferings will be, at any one

time, or even in the continuousness of his sufferings, a slight impression. If lost, he becomes, in fact, lost in more senses than one,—*lost* not only to happiness and hope, but lost in the sense that his name is forgotten and that his individual sufferings are unknown to the universe at large. An impression may be indeed made by the *aggregate* of woe endured by all the lost; but the name of the individual sufferer will be unknown, and, sunk in the vast host, his particular sorrows will have no such conspicuity as to make any impression on the universe at large. Of all the inmates of the penitentiaries in this land, it is a rare thing that the sufferings of an *individual* make any impression on the community, or that he contributes in any more than the slightest possible degree to keep up the impression of the value of the law and of the evil of violating it. After the interest excited by the trial is over and he is consigned to his cell, the case ceases to attract public interest. The name and memory of the convict soon die away from the recollection of mankind; and whether he suffers little or much, provided the exact sentence of the law be adhered to, excites no interest in the world at large. He soon loses the melancholy conspicuity which he attracted by the commission of the crime and by the process of trial, and is forgotten; for all that ever created an interest in his case, and all that ever gave him conspicuity, has been accomplished in arresting him and consigning him to deserved punishment. Unable any longer to awaken an interest in the bosoms of his fellow-men, he drags out in solitude and neglect the weary years of his confinement, having sunk to that ob-

scurity from which he was elevated temporarily by the commission of the crime. An impression may indeed be made in a community by a knowledge of the fact that there *is* a penitentiary, and that there *are* guilty men incarcerated there; but the sufferings of the *individual* attract no attention and make no impression. From the nature of the case, will it not be so in regard to the sufferers in the world of woe?

(3.) But what has now been stated would *not* occur in reference to the substitute in the atonement. If it be a part of the doctrine of the atonement, and essential to that doctrine, that the Redeemer was Divine, that he was “God manifest in the flesh,” that there was in a proper sense an incarnation of the Deity, then it is clear that such an incarnation, and the sufferings of such an one on a cross, were events adapted to make an impression on the universe at large deeper by far than would be done by the sufferings of the guilty themselves, though those sufferings should involve sorrow—the sorrow of remorse—which the innocent one could not experience, and though they should be prolonged to a far more extended duration. If it should be supposed that the heir-apparent to a crown *could* take the place of any number of rebellious subjects and endure in their place the suffering appointed for rebels and traitors, though it might be true that his individual sorrows might not equal the amount of the aggregate sorrows of all who would otherwise have died, and though it should be admitted that there would be an element in their sufferings which would not enter into his,—the element of remorse,—it would nevertheless be true that a deeper impres-

sion would be made by his public execution than would be by the sufferings of the offenders themselves. That impression would be produced not only by the unusual character of the transaction, but by the manifest fact that the crime was regarded as of a nature so serious as to require such an expiation, and by the purpose manifested by the sovereign to maintain inflexibly the authority of the law. All eyes would be turned towards the illustrious sufferer; all hearts would be filled with compassion; all business would be suspended in the contemplation of the amazing scene; all men would feel that there was an unspeakable majesty in the law and an unspeakable importance in maintaining its authority; all would be made sensible that that must be a vast evil which made it necessary that such sufferings should be endured by one of so exalted a rank. And if on such an occasion the sovereign himself should adopt some unusual and impressive measures to bear testimony to the dignity and moral worth of the sufferer, and to show the estimate which *he* put on the benevolence which the voluntary sufferer manifested in being willing to endure these sorrows in behalf of others, all would feel that such a manifestation would be appropriate, as all must feel that it was appropriate that the Eternal Father should command the sun to withdraw his beams, and the earth to tremble, and the rocks to rend—to spread a universal pall over the world—when his Son expired on the cross.

I have said that the individual sufferer sinking down into the common and undistinguished abyss of woes might be forgotten, and that his name and

his sufferings might never be known to the universe at large. Not so, however, with Him who took his place and died in his stead,—the Son of God. His cross became for the time the centre of observation in the universe. He had descended from heaven and had taken upon himself the form of a man. He had subjected himself voluntarily to poverty, shame, and contempt; he had been bound, and scourged, and publicly rejected; he had submitted to a mock trial and to an unjust condemnation; he had borne his own cross to the place of crucifixion, and had voluntarily given himself up to be put to death in a form that involved the keenest torture that men could inflict. Rejected of men, and apparently forsaken of God, he had taken upon himself the “burden of the world’s atonement.” If that scene actually occurred, then angels and distant worlds *must* have felt an interest in it which they could not feel in the sufferings of the guilty themselves. If he died to show by these sufferings the value of the law and the evil of disobedience, then no sufferings of the guilty themselves could make so deep an impression on angelic minds and on distant worlds as the substituted and voluntary sorrows of the Son of God.

If now an objector should recur to a question already suggested, and ask, What after all, is the *value* of such sufferings? what is their exact bearing? why might not the same ends have been secured without suffering? and how can it be supposed that these sufferings would contribute to secure the favour of God? it may be asked, in reply, What is the bearing of suffering at all? What, in any case, is its exact value? How does it contribute to

secure the favour of God? How does it avail in leading men to penitence and in preparing for usefulness and heaven? How do the sufferings of patriots contribute to procure the Divine favour in the bestowment of liberty? What bearing can they have on God? What can they do to incline him to impart his favour? Why should he not bestow the same favour without the suffering? Yet they *do* secure blessings from God; for, as has been already observed, a large part of the blessings which we enjoy can be traced to the instrumentality of suffering, and if the suffering had not been endured, so far as now appears, the favour would not have been conferred. Perhaps it may yet be found to be true that the principle which would explain *this* fact, and show the connection, in any case, between suffering and the Divine favour, *might* explain all the essential principles and remove all the material difficulties in the doctrine of the atonement. If I have, in fact, received blessings from God through the sufferings of patriots and friends which I should not otherwise have received, it seems difficult to see why we may not advance with the same principle to the higher subjects of redemption, and why it may not follow that voluntary substituted sufferings may in some way secure the blessings of a higher life. If the sufferings of friends may have operated to remove *obstacles* out of the way so that valuable temporal mercies have been imparted to me, and if the sufferings of patriots have removed *obstacles* out of the way so that the blessings of liberty have been bestowed upon me, it seems difficult to see why the sufferings of the Redeemer

may not, in a higher sense, remove obstacles out of the way so that the blessings of salvation may be now bestowed upon me.

(2.) *The atonement SECURES reconciliation between God and man.*

This is, indeed, the proper meaning of the word *atonement*—*at-one-ment*, or the being *at one*—as used in our language; and this idea is perhaps always suggested when the term is used, even when it is employed in its most strict theological sense, or when it is employed strictly to denote the *means* by which reconciliation is effected. There occurs to the mind at once the idea of parties at variance; and then the idea of some means to satisfy the party that has been wronged; and then the idea of reconciliation or harmony effected. The point now to be illustrated is that the atonement is of such a nature as to *secure* reconciliation between God and man; that is, to do whatever is necessary to remove the obstacles to reconciliation and to secure actual harmony and friendship.

In illustrating this point, the following remarks may be made.

a. Nothing is more *difficult* than the task of reconciling opposing minds. This is seen in the attempt to reconcile individuals who have become alienated from each other in a family or in a neighbourhood, or among those who have been formerly friends; in the attempts to produce peace and harmony where parties carry their grievances before courts of justice, when, though the mere *pecuniary* part of the difficulty may be adjusted, the alienation of mind and heart is often entirely unaffected; and in the attempts

to restore peace between nations at war. This difficulty is often increased by pride and prejudice: it is augmented if the imagination has magnified the difficulty; if friends on either side have become enlisted in the strife; if the controversy has been long continued; if the causes of the difficulty have been accumulating for years; if it relates to many points at issue; if the parties have become openly committed to a claim that is set up, or if their becoming reconciled will be construed as yielding a point of honour; and the difficulty is not the less if only one party—as is often the case—is in the wrong, and if the other not only has done no wrong but is willing now even to make sacrifices for the sake of peace. Hence it is that there is no office more difficult, and commonly more thankless, than that of a mediator; that there is no man to whom we are less disposed to listen than to him who undertakes to convince us that we are wrong in such a controversy, and who endeavours to induce us to abandon a position which we have tenaciously or obstinately held, and who would persuade us to be at peace with one from whom we have been long estranged.

b. There is an alienation between God and man; and this is the foundation of all the evil that has come upon the race. It is everywhere in the Bible charged on man that he is estranged from his Maker; and it is everywhere affirmed that God cannot be at peace with men unless something shall be done that shall remove the cause of alienation.

1. On the part of man, nothing is more apparent

than the fact of his alienation from God. The history of the world proves it. God is not loved. His law is not obeyed. His arrangements are not submitted to. His government is regarded as harsh, severe, unequal, unjust. There is in the human soul a foundation of estrangement from God lying back of the Divine dealings towards the race,—an opposition to his character and claims antecedent to any thing that he does to call forth the feelings of the soul; and this becomes manifest when the Divine law is laid across the path of men and the claims of that law come in collision with the feelings and purposes of the soul. This opposition to God is one of the earliest conscious feelings of our nature, and it is fostered and sustained by all the pride of the human heart, by all its impatience of control, by all its cherished plans as they are developed in life, by all the passions which are engendered in carrying out our chosen schemes, and by the fact that in those schemes we become *committed* before the world. Nothing is more manifest than the fact that such an alienation exists on the part of man towards his Maker; nothing is more difficult than to overcome this and to make man *willing* to be at peace with God.

2. Equally manifest is it that there is on the part of God an alienation or estrangement from man. This is clear from the Divine dealings towards the race. *Man is not treated as if there was peace between him and his Maker.* The Divine dealings towards the race are not such as they would be on the supposition that God is pleased with human conduct. Man is not dealt with as we must suppose unfallen

angels are, or as he himself would have been if he had not fallen. We can find, indeed, in the Divine dealings, abundant proofs of the goodness of God; we can see evidence that he is willing to be at peace with the race and that he is ready to forgive sin; we can easily demonstrate that there are and have been prospective arrangements for his becoming reconciled to man; but we look in vain for the evidence that that peace already exists. There is even in the bosom of the guilty themselves—in their sense of guilt, in the feeling of remorse, in the apprehension of the wrath of God, in the pre-intimations in the soul of a coming judgment—much which may be regarded as designed to be a proof of the fact of such an alienation on the part of God, as it certainly is of an alienation on the part of man; and we may see abundant evidence of such an alienation on the part of God in his dealings. All the calamities which come upon individuals or nations as the effect of sin; all the arrangements in the human constitution for the infliction of suffering as the result of a certain course of conduct; all the forms of disease that invade the human frame and sweep off the living to their graves, are so many proofs that God regards the race as guilty and that there is an estrangement between himself and man. Such things are not tokens of friendship and favour. They are not direct proofs of love. They would not occur in a just and benevolent administration unless there was a foundation in the conduct and character of man for the Divine displeasure.

c. The atonement removes the obstacles to recon-

ciliation alike on the part of God and on the part of man.

1. On the part of God. The obstacles to reconciliation on his part did not arise from any unwillingness to be at peace with man; from any want of a benevolent regard to his welfare; from any enmity in his own feelings towards the race as such; from the causes which often produce and perpetuate alienations among men; but solely from the fact that he is the Lawgiver of the universe, and that his law has been violated; from the fact that the law has a just penalty, threatening death to the violator; from the fact that the perfections of God required that his declared views of the evil of sin should be consistently carried out before the universe; from the fact that if the transgressor was released from the penalty of the law there would seem to be a total disregard of the law and its threatenings; from the fact that, if the sinner was admitted to the favour conferred on those who had not sinned, it would seem as if God was regardless of character and treated the good and the bad alike; and from the fact that such treatment would seem to set aside all the restraints of the law, and abolish all the boundaries between right and wrong, and destroy all the securities set up to secure the interests of justice.

In the idea of the atonement it is supposed that these difficulties have been removed, and that God is in all respects now as free to bestow his favour on those for whom it was made as he is on those who have never violated his law. It is clear that this must be so if it be true that as much has been done by the substituted sufferings of the Redeemer to

show regard for the law as would have been by the sufferings of the guilty themselves if they had borne the penalty. If all has been accomplished by those substituted sufferings which would have been accomplished had the penalty of the law been inflicted on the offenders, nothing can be plainer than that the guilty, so far as this point is concerned, may be released, or that pardon may properly be granted to them. If a debt has been paid, and all the ends of justice contemplated in the obligation to pay a debt are secured, the debtor is discharged of course; if another is willing to become security for the payment of the debt and will hold himself liable to it, and he to whom the debt is due is willing to accept the security, the debtor may in that instance also be discharged.

In the atonement it is supposed that Christ has done *as much* to maintain the honour of the law as would have been done had it been personally obeyed by all who will be saved by him; that he has done *as much* to maintain that honour as would have been done had its penalty been literally borne by all for whom he died; that he has done *as much* to deter others from violating that law as would have been done by the infliction of the penalty on the offenders themselves; that he has done *as much* to show the sense entertained by God of the evil of sin as would have been done had the fearful consequences of sin come upon the guilty themselves. If all this *was* done, then it is clear that there would be no obstacle on the part of God to reconciliation with those who had violated the law.

2. The atonement removes the obstacles to recon-

ciliation on the part of man. Those obstacles do not arise from any reference in his conduct to the interests of the universe; but they arise solely from the love of sin and the unwillingness of man to be reconciled to his Maker. The object to be accomplished, so far as man is concerned, is to bring him to a *willingness* to be at peace with God and to accept of pardon and salvation on the terms proposed. The question is whether there can be introduced into the work of the atonement such an influence as will overcome the unwillingness of the sinner to be at peace with God.

We have seen that in human administrations of law one great difficulty in the way of pardon is that there is no *security* for the reformation and future good conduct of him who is pardoned, but that, if an influence could be connected with the instrument of pardon which would secure this, the difficulty would be removed. This is contemplated in the atonement. It is an essential idea in its nature that it *will* secure this effect,—that in the gift of a Saviour, in his character, in the manifestations of his love, and in his sufferings in behalf of others, there is that which *will* secure repentance and reformation on the part of the sinner. By the greatness of the sufferings of him who made it, the atonement is adapted to convince the sinner of the evil of those sins for which he died; by the manifestation of love, it is adapted to make an appeal to the gratitude of man; by the fact that those sufferings were endured in our behalf, it is fitted most deeply to appeal to the hearts of the guilty. We are always more deeply affected with the suf-

ferings of the innocent than with the sufferings of the guilty. The guilty we feel ought to suffer, and our judgments approve of the punishment if it be not beyond the desert of the offender. The feeling of compassion is checked and bounded by the fact that what is endured is deserved. We are deeply affected by the sufferings of others if they are the consequences of our own offences. A young man might care very little about the calamities that would come upon himself as the consequence of a career of folly and dissipation, while he might be deeply affected at the suffering which he has brought upon a sister or a mother. When all else is ineffectual in recovering an intemperate man from his course of life,—when his own disgrace and suffering fail to lead him to reformation,—there is still one source of appeal that may be effectual. The sufferings of his wife and children may still be appealed to, with the hope that his heart may be touched with a sense of the calamities which he is bringing upon others, though insensible to the woes which he brings upon himself. So, also, in a penitentiary, as has been intimated before, there is no hope of the permanent reformation of an offender from the mere infliction of punishment. Probably a case has never occurred in which the darkness of a dungeon, severity of labour, starvation, chains and stripes, have melted the heart of an offender and brought him to repentance. So well is this now understood that the only hope of securing repentance and reformation in a prison is from a *side-influence*,—an influence that goes forth from sympathy and compassion; not from the turnkey, but from the heart of some

Howard, who comes to show the prisoner that he has another purpose than that of riveting more closely his chains. It is not law that reforms: it is love, compassion, kindness. In accordance with this view, it is a fact that the reformation of the world has been accomplished, as far as it has been accomplished at all, not by judgment and wrath, but by the gospel of Christ. The great instrument in bringing men to repentance and securing their reformation has been the story of the Redeemer's sufferings. Floods, flames, wars, earthquakes, the plague, the pestilence, have done little to reform the guilty. The human heart grows hard under the infliction of judgment; and though punishment may restrain the guilty and awaken them to reflection, it does not convince and convert. Crimes are multiplied even in the ragings of the pestilence, and men abandon themselves to licentiousness and to corruption when the plague is sweeping away its thousands of victims.* It has been, in fact, the manifestation

* Thus, Thucydides, in his celebrated description of the plague at Athens, says, "The plague was the origin of lawless conduct in the city to a greater extent [than it had before existed]. For deeds which formerly men hid from view, so as not to do them just as they pleased, they now more readily ventured on; since they saw the change so sudden in the case of those who were prosperous and quickly perished, and of those who before had had nothing and at once came into possession of the property of the dead. So they resolved to take their enjoyment quickly and with a sole view to gratification, regarding their lives and their riches alike as things of a day. As for taking trouble about what was thought honourable, no one was forward to do it,—deeming it uncertain whether before he had attained to it he would not be cut off; but every thing that was immediately pleasant, and that which was conducive to it by any means whatever,—this was laid down to be both honourable and ex-

of mercy that has been made the means of melting the hearts of men and of turning them to God.

d. Reconciliation is *in fact* produced between God and man by the atonement. God *becomes* the friend of the pardoned sinner. He admits him to his favour and treats him as a friend. The sinner *becomes* the friend of God. He changes his view of the character of God; he submits to his arrangements; he no longer opposes his plans; he is pleased with his government and his laws. He loves him as he loves no other being. He lives to promote his glory. He loves what God approves, defends what he has stated to be true, advocates the plans which he has formed, vindicates the doctrine which he has revealed, trusts in trial to the promises which he has made, flies to him in times of trouble and sorrow, leans upon his arm in death, finds in the mortal agony his highest consolation in the belief that God *is* his friend, and expects to find felicity in the future world only in God. There is no friendship so strong, so sincere, so tender, so enduring, as that between God and the reconciled sinner; and no work ever undertaken is so complete as that by which the reconciliation of God and man has been sought. It survives all changes through which man

pedient. And fear of gods or law of men there was none to stop them; for with regard to the former they esteemed it all the same whether they worshipped them or not, from seeing all alike perishing; and with regard to their offences (against the latter) no one expected to live till judgment should be passed on him, and so to pay the penalty of them; but they thought a far heavier sentence was impending in that which had already been passed upon them; and that before it fell on them it was right to have some enjoyment of life."—*History of the Peloponnesian War*, ii. 53.

passes here; it is confirmed in death, and will exist forever.

(3.) The atonement *may* be an important means of sustaining the Divine government, and may thus have an important bearing on other worlds.

This is a point, indeed, on which we cannot argue with much certainty; for it lies at present beyond the sphere of our observation. But there are some things which may render it not improbable that there may be bearings of the atonement on other worlds which are now very imperfectly understood by us, and which must be in a great measure hidden until we are admitted to the revelations of the future state. In such passages of Scripture as the following it seems to be implied that the work of the Redeemer may have an important bearing on other parts of the universe, and may furnish to other worlds an illustration of the character of God which could be obtained from no other source. "Which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Peter i. 12.) "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of this mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 9, 10, 11.) "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in

heaven." (Col. i. 19, 20.) The same idea may be expressed also in Eph. i. 10 :—"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth."

It is not to be supposed that we could fully comprehend all the bearings of the work of the atonement on other worlds, or the grounds of the interest which angelic beings are represented as taking in the incarnation of the Son of God; but even with our imperfect and limited vision we can see that there must be important reasons why the inhabitants of other worlds should feel an interest in the redemption of a lost world.

(a.) The revolt of a world is an event which must attract attention. Nothing gives more conspicuity than crime. A man before insignificant and unknown becomes at once exalted into notoriety by becoming a murderer; a commander of a vessel at sea who would have been otherwise undistinguished attracts the attention of nations by becoming a pirate; an officer in an army who would have been soon forgotten in performing the common duties of his station sends down his name to future times by becoming a traitor; a world that might have been undistinguished may become known to all the hosts of worlds by a revolt from the government of the Creator. The earth, therefore, though among the least of the worlds which God has made, may be among those most distinguished; for it is the theatre of revolt from the government of God, and is illustrating in scenes of sorrow the effect of a violation of the Divine laws.

(b.) The question whether a race of rebels could be pardoned would be one that would be of interest to distant worlds. In illustration of this, we may assume the truth of the statement in the Bible that one other order of beings has fallen, and that the sentence of the broken law was executed upon them with no arrangements made for pardon. If we suppose that the fallen angels have been left in their state of rebellion with no provision made for their recovery; if we suppose that their revolt made it certain that they would never be restored to favour; if we suppose that there were no incipient and perceived arrangements made for their restoration; if we suppose that this had continued for a period which would constitute ages as we measure duration, and if we suppose that a new revolt, under their influence, should break out in a new world and under circumstances materially different from the former revolt, it would be too much to infer that the question about the pardon of revolted subjects of the Almighty was so definitely settled by the former revolt that it should awaken no interest in the yet un-fallen ranks of beings before the throne of God. The inquiry could not but occur whether this race would be consigned also to punishment with no hope of remission, or whether some arrangement would be made to check and stay the evil and to prevent the consequences of the apostasy. And though the question would be one on which no light could be thrown from experience, yet it is not unreasonable to suppose that all the *difficulties* would occur in regard to the question of pardon which we have found actually to encompass it. To angelic

beings the difficulties might be as much beyond their range of observation as they are beyond ours. What has surpassed all the wisdom of legislators and statesmen—the proper adjusting of the exercise of mercy with the claims of justice—might be also beyond the reach of angelic intellect. There is no reason to suppose that the device of an *atonement* would have occurred to them as a practicable arrangement; it could not be supposed that they would infer that even the Divine benevolence would suggest this. It might not be that any of the expressions of that benevolence before made would suggest or justify the inference that it would prompt to the exercise of *mercy*. From any thing that appears, the question of *pardon* would be as much above the comprehension of angelic beings as it has been above the practical adjustment of the most wise and benevolent of the legislators of earth. And yet the statements in the Bible which imply that they *did* feel an interest in the question are such as naturally follow from all the conceptions which we must form of the benevolence of unfallen beings.

(c.) We may suppose that the inhabitants of other worlds may see in the atonement some development of the Divine character which could not be elsewhere seen. The reasons for this opinion are such as the following.

1. It is reasonable to suppose that the inhabitants of other worlds *desire* to become acquainted with the character and government of God; and it is equally reasonable to suppose that, in a great measure, they become acquainted with that character and government from what they see in his works. The universe

seems to have been designed to convey to intelligent creatures a knowledge of God; and we have no reason to suppose that, as a great law, even unfallen beings can become acquainted with him except through his works. Those works, so vast and so varied, appear to be adapted to the eternal contemplation of created minds. It was a great problem so to create mind, and so to adapt the universe to it, that it *might* have employment *forever*,—that the works of God should be such that there would never come over any created intellect, however exalted, the feeling that the subject was exhausted; that there remained nothing of God to be learned; that there were no fields of unexplored inquiry and thought.

2. Each one of the worlds appears to have been so made as to furnish some peculiar view of God; to teach some lesson which could not be learned from any other world; to convey some truth about the Divine character which could be seen nowhere else. This seems to be manifest from the wonderful *variety* in the worlds which God has made,—the variety in their size, their motions, their appendages, their orbits. Even with our very imperfect knowledge of the subject, we can see that there would be things to learn of God on the planet Mars which could not be on the earth; on Jupiter, which could not be on Mars; on Saturn, which could not be on Jupiter; on the sun, which could not be on any of the planets; on double stars, which could not be on one solitary sun; on the distant nebulæ, which could not be on the galaxy or milky way—the nebulæ of which our solar system is a part. It is not improbable that on each of those worlds there may be a develop-

ment of some attribute of God of which we can now form no conception; some trait of character a knowledge of which could not now be conveyed to beings with our imperfect powers, though it might be to those of a higher order; and that even beyond all this, there may be depths in the Divine nature—an infinity of attributes and perfections—which even those higher orders of intelligences have now no powers to penetrate or comprehend,—as far above *them* as their knowledge is above *us*.

3. It is probable that what is to be learned from our world of the works and ways of God is to be in connection with the manifestation of his character in the salvation of the guilty; and perhaps this is to be learned in our world alone. The greatness, the majesty, the wisdom, the goodness of God may be seen in other worlds in lessons far surpassing in impressiveness and grandeur those which can be learned from the earth. The angels do not need to come to our world to gain wisdom and knowledge on any of these subjects. The earth is not distinguished for its magnitude, for peculiar beauty, or for grandeur of movement, above other worlds. The dwellers in other worlds need not come down to us to learn lessons of grandeur from our hills and mountains, from our oceans or rivers, from our caves or cata-racts. To those who have ranged from world to world amidst the works of God, there might not be any thing that would attract attention in the vast ocean, so sublime in the view of man; in the storm and tempest; in Mont Blanc or in Niagara. Still less would they be attracted by the monuments that man has reared; the works of art and power

that so impress our minds; the Pyramid, the mausoleum, the triumphal arch, the monuments that have been raised to mark the place where sleep the illustrious dead. Hence, in the visits of angels to the earth, we are never told of their being attracted to Thebes or Palmyra, to the Pantheon or the Parthenon, to Marathon or Leuctra. We find them in the humble abode of Mary, and at Bethlehem; in the Garden of Gethsemane; at the grave of the Saviour; at Mount Olivet. Frequent as have been the visits of angels to our world, there is no evidence that they have been attracted to the Vatican or the Louvre, that they have felt the slightest interest in the Cartoons of Raphael, the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo, or the sculptures of Canova.

If it be asked, then, what angelic beings could be supposed to learn on earth which they could not learn in other worlds,—what gives to our world any distinction or peculiarity as illustrating the perfections of God,—our answer must be that this is to be found in the arrangements for the pardon of sin, in blending together in the work of redemption the attributes of justice and mercy. In no human government, as we have seen, have these attributes been blended. In no individual character on earth have they been perfectly combined. In no other world, so far as we know, have they been united. Angelic beings, therefore, could see in the work of redemption on earth a manifestation of the character of God more interesting by far, as we must suppose, than the exhibition of power and wisdom in the work of creation; and hence they were attracted to Bethlehem, to the Garden of Gethsemane, to the

sepulchre where the Redeemer had lain, and to Mount Olivet; and hence they are attracted to every spot where a sinner weeps over his sins and seeks for pardon and salvation through the blood of the cross.

There may be bearings of the atonement on other worlds which we cannot now understand; for as yet we see but little of the effect of the great work of the incarnation of the Son of God. It is possible that some of the highest developments of the effects of the atonement may yet be made on distant worlds. No one can demonstrate that the remark of Lord Bacon will not yet be found to be true:—"All things in time and eternity have respect to the Mediator, which is the great mystery and perfect centre of all God's ways, and to which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer."

CHAPTER VIII.

CONFIRMATION OF THESE VIEWS OF THE NATURE OF
THE ATONEMENT FROM THE BIBLE.

THE essential points to be established from the Scriptures, as confirming the views which have been taken of the atonement in the previous chapters, are the following.

I. That it is through Christ that reconciliation is effected between God and man.

II. That in accomplishing this he suffered and died as a substitute in the place of sinners.

III. That not only was he himself a substitute, but that his sufferings were *substituted* sufferings, and not the literal penalty of the law.

IV. That this substitution consisted essentially in his blood; that is, in the sacrifice of his life.

V. That the avails of his sufferings may become ours in such a sense that they may be a proper ground of our salvation; that is, a public and sufficient reason why God should treat sinners as if they were righteous.

If these points are made out from the Scriptures, then it is clear that that has been accomplished which it was necessary should be accomplished in the salvation of man, and that the difficulties are met which so much embarrass human governments on the subject of pardon.

I. The first point is that it is through Christ that reconciliation is effected between God and man.

A few passages of the New Testament will put this point beyond dispute.

Romans v. 10, 11: "For if when we were enemies we were *reconciled to God* by the death of his Son, much more, *being reconciled*, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the *atonement*." (Marg. *reconciliation*.) The same Greek word occurs in various forms in each of these passages. The *verb* (verse 10)—*καταλλάσσω*—means, properly, "to change against any thing; to exchange for, *e.g.* money." Then to change a person *towards* another, from enmity to friendship; to *reconcile* to any one. (*Rob. Lex.*) The noun (verse 11)—*καταλλαγή*—corresponds, of course, with this signification, and denotes a *change* from enmity to friendship. The verb occurs only in the following places in the New Testament:—Rom. v. 10, 'we were *reconciled to God*;' 'being *reconciled*;' 1 Cor. vii. 11, 'Let her remain unmarried, or be *reconciled to* [her] husband;' 2 Cor. v. 18, 'Of God, who hath *reconciled us to himself* by Jesus Christ;' 2 Cor. v. 19, '*reconciling the world unto himself*;' 2 Cor. v. 20, 'Be ye *reconciled to God*.' The *noun* occurs only in the following places:—Rom. v. 11, 'by whom we have received the *atonement*;' Rom. xi. 15, 'the *reconciling of the world*;' 2 Cor. v. 18, 'the ministry of *reconciliation*;' 2 Cor. v. 18, 'the word of *reconciliation*.'

In 1 Cor. vii. 11, 'let her remain unmarried, or be *reconciled to her husband*,'—which is the only in-

stance where the word occurs in the New Testament except as connected with the atonement, and which may therefore be used to illustrate the meaning of the word when applied to the atonement,—there can be no doubt as to its meaning. It refers to a case where a woman had ‘departed’ from her husband; that is, where there had been a separation. That separation had been wholly *her* act. The *change*, therefore, was to be on her part; and the *effect* was to be reunion, or reconciliation, with her husband. The existing state was one of separation; the thing to be effected was reunion: the means in the case was to be a *change* in herself. The point reached was a reunion where there had been an alienation or estrangement. The proper use of the word in reference to man is to express the same idea in his relation to God. The point *supposed* is that of alienation or estrangement. The point to be *effected* is a reunion with God. The *change*, so far as indicated by the word, is to be in one of the parties,—in this case in man,—thus differing from another Greek word,—*διαλλάσσω*,—which properly implies *mutual* change. (Tittm. de Syn. N. T., p. 101, seq., as quoted by Robinson, Lex.) The *means*, or *medium*, of the reconciliation or the reunion of God and man is expressly declared to be the Lord Jesus Christ, ‘*by whom* we have now received the *reconciliation*,’ (Rom. v. 11.)—which is the very point to be made out.

The same idea occurs in the passages in 2 Corinthians v. Thus, in verse 18 of that chapter, it is said, “All things are of God, who hath *reconciled* us to himself *by Jesus Christ*.” The statement here is

explicit as to the point now under consideration,—that a reconciliation is effected between God and man, and that this is accomplished by Jesus Christ. The same idea is repeated in verse 19 of the same chapter:—“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.” That is, God, by the agency of Christ, was reconciling the world unto himself. And the same idea is implied in verse 20 of the same chapter:—“As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” That is, as ambassadors of Christ, they (the apostles) plead with men that they *would be* reconciled to God. They came in his name. They occupied, by appointment, his place. They did what *he* would do if he were personally addressing them. In other words, God was the great agent by whom this reconciliation was to be effected, and the apostles were merely his ambassadors in carrying out the great work intrusted to them.

The meaning of these passages cannot be mistaken. In all of them it is implied (*a*) that there was an alienation between man and God; (*b*) that there were obstacles to be overcome before a reconciliation could be secured; and (*c*) that these obstacles were in fact overcome, and the reconciliation secured, by the intervention and work of the Redeemer. As it is impossible to convey the idea that it is by means of Christ that reconciliation is effected between God and man, in any plainer language than that which occurs in these passages, the point may be regarded as demonstrated.

II. The second point is, that, in securing this re-

conciliation, Christ was properly a substitute in the place of sinners. A 'substitute' is "one person put in the place of another to answer the same purpose."—*Webster*. The idea is, that the person substituted is to do or suffer the same thing which the person for whom he is substituted would have done. An agent, an attorney, or a representative, is to act for the person for whom he is substituted as the person himself would have done in the case. A nation is threatened with invasion. The inhabitants of a certain district are assembled, and a 'draft' is made of a certain proportion to constitute a military force to repel the invader. When one is drawn to serve in the army, instead of going himself, he is permitted to employ, at his own expense, another, who shall be equally able-bodied and equally skilled in the 'art of war.' He who is thus voluntarily substituted in the place of him that was drafted to perform the service goes forth in his stead, to do what he was to do, to suffer what he would have suffered, to encounter the danger which he would have encountered. If he experiences cold and hunger in the service, it is in the place of what he on whom the lot fell would have suffered; if he dies on the field of battle, it is in his stead; if he renders any service in repelling the foe or in establishing the liberties of his country, it is in his place; if he is crowned with the rewards due to a victor, he wears the garland which the man in whose place he was substituted would have worn.

So, in the plan of atonement, it is supposed that the Lord Jesus Christ took the place of sinners. He died that they might not die. He placed him-

self between them and the sword of justice; he received in his own person, as far as could be done, what was due to them; and he thus saved them from experiencing in the world of despair what was due to their sins. He effected so much by his voluntary sufferings that it was not necessary, by any demands of justice, to inflict the penalty of the law on those for whom he died.

Two passages of Scripture will illustrate what is meant by *substitution*, though they are not here adduced as proof that Christ died in the place of sinners. One occurs in John xi. 49, 50: "And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high-priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not." The idea of Caiaphas is not that Jesus would die as a sacrifice for sin, but that his death would avert the ruin of the nation; that, unless he was thus put to death, the Romans would come and take away their place and nation. In what way he supposed that this would avert such a calamity, it is not necessary now to inquire. The idea is simply that his death would in some way be *instead* of the ruin of the nation. Perhaps he meant that by thus giving him up to death they would show their zeal for the suppression of every thing that seemed to endanger the Roman power, and that, if this was not shown in a case like this, the Romans would suppose that they were disposed to encourage a spirit of insubordination and revolt, and would come and inflict summary vengeance on them. The other passage occurs in Isaiah xliii. 3, 4: "I am the Lord

thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore I will give men for thee, and people for thy life." The idea here is, that the Egyptians were regarded as having been given up to destruction *instead* of the Hebrews. Either the Jewish or the Egyptian people must perish; and God chose that Egypt, though so much more mighty, should be reduced to desolation *in order* to deliver the Hebrew people. They were destroyed *instead* of the Hebrews, and in order that they might be delivered from bondage. On the same principle it is said, in verse 4, that God would continue to do this. His people were so precious in his sight that he says, 'I will,' if necessary, 'give men,' that is, the men of other nations, 'for thee, and people,' that is, the people of other lands, 'for thy life.' He would not see his own people ruined; and if the case should occur that one or the other *must* perish, he would deliver up the people of other lands to ruin rather than his own people. This is referred to now, not as having any reference to the atonement, but as an *illustration* of it. The regular course of things would have been that the Hebrews would have been crushed and destroyed. But God chose that it should be otherwise, and preferred that the calamity should come upon the Egyptians. In the case of redemption, ruin was coming upon the race of man. It was certain that unless there was some substitution the race would perish. Sufferings indescribable and awful—sufferings that would express the Divine sense of the value of law

and of the evil of a violation of that law—must come either upon the offenders themselves, or upon some one who should take their place; and God chose that those sufferings should come upon the Redeemer rather than upon the guilty. Thus they might be saved, and at the same time there might be an expression of the Divine sense of the value of law and of the evil of a violation of that law, as clear and as impressive as though the guilty had themselves borne the full penalty of the law.

That this is the doctrine of the Scriptures will be apparent from the passages now to be quoted.

One of the words which properly denote *in place of*, or *instead of*, in the sense of substitution, is the Greek ἀντί, (*anti*.) That this word denotes *substitution*, or *in the place of*, is apparent from these passages:—Matt. ii. 22: “*In the room [ἀντί] of his father Herod.*” Matt. v. 38: “*An eye for [ἀντί] an eye, and a tooth for [ἀντί] a tooth.*” Luke xi. 11: “*If he ask a fish, will he for [ἀντί] a fish give him a serpent?*” James iv. 15: “*For [ἀντί] that,*” that is, *instead of that*, “*ye ought to say.*” Yet this word is used by the Redeemer in explaining the object for which he came into the world:—Matt. xx. 28: “*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for [ἀντί] many;*” that is, his life was a ransom—λύτρον—in the place of the many. There is no word in the Greek language which would more naturally convey the idea of a substitution than this. There is none which a writer *intending* to express the thought that one did any thing in the place of another, would more naturally employ. It may be

added that, if it was *not* the purpose of the Saviour to convey this idea, it is difficult to account for the fact that a word should have been used which would be so likely to deceive the world as to the true intent and object of his coming. Beyond all doubt, he used a word in the language which he employed (probably the Syro-Chaldaic) whose natural and proper signification would be expressed by the Greek word ἀντί, (*anti*,) *instead of, in the place of.*

Another Greek word which conveys the same idea of substitution is ὑπέρ, (*hyper*.) The word conveys the general idea of protection, care, benefit, favour, *for, in behalf of, for the sake of*; properly, as if bending over (ὑπέρ) a person or thing, and thus warding off what might fall upon it and harm it. (*Rob. Lex.*) Hence it comes to be used after words which imply the suffering of evil or death *for, or in behalf of*, any one; and it is in this sense that it is employed in reference to the death of Christ. The *general* sense of doing any thing *in behalf of, for the sake of*, may be seen in the following passages:—John xvii. 19; Acts xxi. 26; 2 Cor. iii. 8; Col. i. 7, iv. 12; Heb. vi. 20, xiii. 17. The *particular* idea as applicable to the work of the Redeemer, in the sense that his death was *in behalf of* or *for* us,—that is, was so substituted as to avert the curse that was descending on us,—may be seen in the following passages:—Luke xxii. 19: “This is my body which is given *for* [ὑπέρ] you.” Luke xxii. 20: “This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed *for* [ὑπέρ] you.” John vi. 51: “The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give *for* [ὑπέρ] the life of the world.” John x. 11: “The good shepherd giveth

his life *for* [ὑπέρ] the sheep." John x. 15: "I lay down my life *for* [ὑπέρ] the sheep." John xv. 13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life *for* [ὑπέρ] his friends." Still more explicitly the idea occurs in the following language:—

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died *for* [ὑπέρ] the ungodly." Rom. v. 6. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died *for* [ὑπέρ] us." Rom. v. 8. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up *for* [ὑπέρ] us all." Rom. viii. 32. "Destroy not him with thy meat *for* [ὑπέρ] whom Christ died." Rom. xiv. 15. So also in 1 Cor. i. 13: "Was Paul crucified *for* [ὑπέρ] you?" 1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed *for* [ὑπέρ] us." 1 Cor. xv. 3: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died *for* [ὑπέρ] our sins." 2 Cor. v. 14, 15: "We thus judge that if one died *for* [ὑπέρ] all, then were all dead; and that he died *for* [ὑπέρ] all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died *for* [ὑπέρ] them and rose again." 2 Cor. v. 21: "He hath made him to be sin *for* [ὑπέρ] us, who knew no sin." Gal. i. 4: "Who gave himself *for* [ὑπέρ] our sins." Gal. ii. 20: "Who gave himself *for* [ὑπέρ] me." Gal. iii. 13: "Being made a curse *for* [ὑπέρ] us." Eph. v. 2: "Christ hath loved us, and given himself *for* [ὑπέρ] us." Eph. v. 25: "Christ loved the church, and gave himself *for* [ὑπέρ] it." 1 Thess. v. 10: "Who died *for* [ὑπέρ] us." 1 Tim. ii. 6: "Who gave himself a ransom *for* [ὑπέρ] all." Titus ii. 14: "Who gave himself *for* [ὑπέρ] us." Heb. ii. 9: "That he by the grace of God should taste death

for [ὅτι] every man." 1 Peter ii. 21: "Because Christ also suffered for [ὅτι] us." 1 Peter iii. 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for [ὅτι] the unjust." 1 Peter iv. 1: "Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for [ὅτι] us in the flesh." 1 John iii. 16: "Because he laid down his life for [ὅτι] us."

These passages undoubtedly express the idea of substitution. The language is such as a Greek would use if he *wished* to convey that idea. He could find no better terms in his own copious language to express that thought; and if this language does *not* convey the idea, then it is impossible to express so plain a thought in human language. Those who believe the doctrine of substitution, or the doctrine that Christ died in the place of sinners, have no plainer words by which to express their belief than those which are employed in these passages of the New Testament; and why should it not be supposed that language in the Bible equally explicit and apparently unambiguous—language which men now themselves employ as best adapted to convey their meaning—should express, as it seems to, the same idea? Is it impossible for God to convey so plain a thought to mankind as that He whom he sent into the world died as a *substitute* for sinners, or that his death was in their stead? And, if he meant to do this, could even he find human language which would convey the doctrine more clearly? And *would* he employ language commonly used to denote the idea of substitution, unless that was the true doctrine? Would he use language which would deceive the great mass of those for whom the

Bible was given? Could we honour a God who would do this? and could we have faith in a book claiming to be a revelation where language was thus employed?

III. The third point necessary to be established is, that the sufferings of the Redeemer were *substituted sufferings*, or that they were not *the real and literal penalty of the law*. This differs from the point which has just been considered. That was, that *he himself* was a substitute, or that he took the place of sinners and died in their stead; that is, it was not the person who had violated the law who suffered, but another in his place. The point now to be established is, that the *sufferings themselves were substituted sufferings*, or that they were not the real and literal penalty of the law, but were *in the place* of that penalty and were designed to answer the same end.

In a previous chapter I have endeavoured to show that it does not enter into a just view of the atonement that he who made it should endure the same sufferings as the guilty for whom he died, or that he should bear the same *amount* of suffering; or, in other words, that he should endure the literal penalty of the law. The question was then argued on general grounds, without any particular reference to the Scriptures. The inquiry now is, whether the Bible teaches that Christ endured the real and literal penalty of the law, or whether the doctrine of the Bible is that his sufferings were *substituted sufferings*, as well as that he himself was a substituted person.

This question I shall endeavour to answer by showing, first, that in the treatment of the Redeemer, God

regarded him as righteous and declared him to be righteous; second, that the statements in the Bible do not imply that he endured the penalty of the law; and, third, that the doctrine of the Bible is that his sufferings were substituted sufferings.

(1.) In the Divine treatment of the Redeemer, God regarded him as righteous and declared him to be righteous. There is no intimation that he was in any sense, either personally or by implication, regarded as undeserving or sinful; that, on any account, he *deserved* the sufferings which came upon him; that any affliction came upon him which, by a fair interpretation, could be construed as implying that he was not at that very moment the object in the highest degree of the Divine favour. In other words, he is never spoken of as in any sense of the term *guilty*; nor was there any act of God towards him which was not susceptible of an explanation on the supposition that he was perfectly holy and was at that moment the object of God's highest love.

This point is so plain in the New Testament that it is scarcely necessary to attempt to demonstrate it; but it is important to remark how carefully it is stated, and how constantly the idea is held up to the mind, *as if* it was supposed that at some time in the future history of the Church, a view of the atonement would be held which would be based on the idea that the Redeemer so took the sins of men upon him that it would be right to speak of him as guilty, or that such views of the imputation of sin would be held that the fair interpretation of those views would be that there was a transfer of guilt to him, and that it would be proper to speak of him *as a*

‘sinner,’—as suffering ‘justly,’—as so exactly in the place of sinners that he could properly be spoken of in the same language which would be applied to them. Such language has been used, and such views have been entertained; and it was apparently in anticipation of the fact that such views would be held and such language employed that so much care was taken so to state the fact of his perfect innocence that the best security should be provided *against* such an abuse of the doctrine of the atonement. As an illustration of the views which it was foreseen would be held, and as showing the propriety of the Divine caution on the subject, the following language of the great Reformer, Luther, may be referred to. Nothing but the importance of the point now before us will justify me even in placing this language before the eyes of my readers. “And this,” says Luther,* “no doubt all the prophets did foresee in spirit,—*that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, blasphemer,* THAT EVER WAS OR COULD BE IN THE WORLD. For he, being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person and without sins; is not now the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary; but a sinner which hath and carrieth the sin of Paul, who was a blasphemer, an oppressor, and a persecutor; of Peter, which denied Christ; of David, which was an adulterer, a murderer, and caused the Gentiles to blaspheme the name of the Lord; and, briefly, which hath and

* Com. on the Epistle to the Galatians, ch. iii. 13, pp. 213–215. Ed. London, 1838.

beareth all the sins of all men in his body: not that he himself committed them, but for that he received them, being committed or done of us, and laid them upon his own body, that he might make satisfaction for them with his own blood. Therefore, this general sentence of Moses comprehendeth him also, (albeit in his own person he was innocent,) because it found him amongst sinners and transgressors; like as the magistrate taketh him for a thief, and punisheth him, whom he findeth among other thieves and transgressors, though he never committed any thing worthy of death. When the law, therefore, found him among thieves, it condemned and killed him as a thief." "If thou wilt deny him to be a sinner and accursed, deny also that he was crucified and was dead." "But if it be not absurd to confess and believe that Christ was crucified between two thieves, then it is not absurd to say that he was ACCURSED, AND OF ALL SINNERS THE GREATEST." "God, our most merciful Father, sent his only Son into the world, and laid upon him all the sins of all men, saying, Be thou Peter, that denier; Paul, that persecutor, blasphemer, and cruel oppressor; David, that adulterer; that sinner which did eat the apple in Paradise; that thief which hanged upon the cross; and, briefly, be thou the person which hath committed all the sins of all men. See, therefore, that thou pay and satisfy for them."*

On this point, however, the teachings of the New Testament are plain and unequivocal. 1 Peter ii. 22: "Who did no sin; neither was guile found in

* The underscoring is mine.

his mouth." Heb. iv. 15: "But was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. vii. 26: "Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." 1 Peter iii. 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust." Isa. liii. 9: "Because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Isa. liii. 11: "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." Matt. ii. 17: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"—*εὐδόκησεν*,—where the form of the word (the *aorist*) shows that the affirmation that God was 'well pleased' with him had no reference to any particular *time*, but pertained to *all* times. He was *always* well pleased with him.

In the nature of the case, also, it cannot be doubted that the character of Christ was *always* well pleasing to God. In his undertaking the work of redemption; in his manifested character on earth; in his teachings; in the spirit with which he bore his trials; in his readiness to meet death, and in the manner in which he actually met it; in the offers of salvation which he made to mankind on the ground of the sacrifice which he made for human guilt, no one who believes in the Saviour at all can doubt that he was in all respects pleasing to God. Whatever were the sufferings which were brought upon him, they were not of the nature of punishment for his own offences; whatever was the reason why he was left to darkness and gloom on the cross, it was not because he had incurred for himself the wrath of God. In the very midst of those sufferings he was performing a work which, of all the works ever per-

formed on the earth, was most acceptable to a pure and holy God.

(2.) The fair teachings of the Bible do not imply that he endured the penalty of the law.

If an attempt were made to show that he *did* endure the literal penalty of the law, reliance would be placed on such texts as the following:—Isa. liii: “The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” 2 Cor. v. 21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us.” Gal. iii. 13: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” 1 Peter ii. 24: “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” Isa. liii. 12: “He bare the sin of many.”

These passages are so far similar that the same general remarks may be made in regard to them all. That they prove that Christ died for the sins of men; that he took the place of sinners; that his death was a sacrifice; that he made a true atonement for human guilt, are points fully established by them: at least, between those who hold the doctrine defended in this treatise, and those who maintain that Christ endured the literal penalty of the law, there will be, in these respects, no difference of opinion.

In respect, however, to the question whether they teach that he endured the literal penalty of the law, the following observations may be made.

(a) They are fairly susceptible of an interpretation in accordance with the belief that he did *not* endure the literal penalty of the law. It is incumbent on those who hold that he *did* endure the literal penalty of the law to show, not merely that these passages *might* be so construed as to teach that doctrine, but

that they are susceptible of no other interpretation. If they taught that there was a transfer of moral character or of guilt in the proper sense of the term, or if that doctrine was fairly proved by any other passages of the Bible, then it would be necessary to admit that this would be the fair interpretation of these passages. The question is, whether they necessarily imply this. A few remarks on these passages will show that this interpretation is not required, but that they are susceptible of another explanation.

The passage in 2 Cor. v. 21—"he hath made him to be sin for us"—*cannot* be intended to be literally true. Even those who maintain that he endured the penalty of the law cannot hold, and do not profess to hold, that it was literally true that he was made to be *sin*. In no proper sense can it be true that he was *made* to be a *sinner*; for this would be contrary to the teaching of the passages just quoted, that he 'knew no sin,' that he was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners,' and that he 'died the *just* for the unjust.' We must therefore look for some other interpretation than the literal one; and that is found in the doctrine that the word here rendered *sin*, in accordance with Hebrew usage, is employed in the sense of *sin-offering*. Compare Hos. iv. 8; Ezek. xliii. 22, 25, xliv. 29, xlv. 22, 23, 25; Lev. vi. 18, 23.

A similar passage occurs in Galatians iii. 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The word here used, and rendered *curse*,—*κατάρα*,—means properly, as with us, *cursing, malediction, execration, a devoting or doom-*

ing to destruction. It occurs in the New Testament in the following places:—Col. iii. 10, 13, rendered *curse*; Heb. vi. 8, James iii. 10, rendered *cursing*; and 2 Peter ii. 14, rendered *curse*. It conveys the idea of being given over to destruction, or left without those influences which would protect and save,—as a land that is given over to the curse of sterility or barrenness. Applied to a lost sinner, it would mean that all saving influences were withdrawn and that he was given over to the malediction of God. But what is its meaning as applied to the Redeemer in the passage now before us? (a.) It cannot mean that he was made a curse in the sense that his work and character were displeasing to God; for, as we have seen, just the contrary doctrine is everywhere taught in the New Testament. (b.) It cannot mean that he was the object of the Divine displeasure, and was therefore abandoned by him to deserved destruction. (c.) It cannot be employed as denoting that he was in any sense *ill deserving* or *blameworthy*; for this is equally contrary to the teachings of the Bible. (d.) It cannot mean that he was *guilty* in the usual and proper meaning of the word, and that therefore he was punished; for this would not be true. (e.) It cannot mean that he bore the literal penalty of the law; for, as we have seen, there are parts of that penalty—remorse of conscience, and eternity of suffering—which he did not, and could not, bear. (f.) It cannot mean that he was sinful, or a sinner, in any sense; for this is equally contrary to all the teachings of the Bible in regard to his character. (g.) There is but one other conceivable meaning that can be attached to the

passage, and that is that, though innocent, *he was treated in his death AS IF he had been guilty*; that is, he was put to death AS IF he had personally deserved it. That this is the meaning is implied in the explanation which the apostle himself gives of his own language:—"being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." He was suspended on a cross, *as if* he had been a malefactor. He was numbered with malefactors; he was crucified between them; he was given up by God and man to death *as if* he had himself been such a malefactor. In other words, he was put to death in the same manner as he would have been if he had been personally guilty of the violation of the law. Had he been a thief or murderer, had he committed the grossest and blackest crimes, this would have been the punishment to which he would have been subjected. He consented to die in the same manner as the vilest malefactor, in order that by his substituted sorrows he might save those who were personally guilty. The idea which makes the atonement so wonderful—the idea which makes it *an atonement at all*—is, that innocence was treated *as if* it were guilt; that the most pure and holy and benevolent being on earth was treated AS IF he had been the most vile and ill deserving. As the ideas above referred to exhaust all the conceivable meanings of the passage before us, the demonstration seems to be complete that it cannot mean that the Redeemer was made a literal *curse*, or that he endured the literal penalty of the law.

(b.) Those passages are not only susceptible of another interpretation than that Christ endured the

penalty of the law, but they *must have such an interpretation.*

1. If this were *not* so, then it would be proper to speak of Christ, as Luther did, as a 'sinner' and as the 'greatest of sinners.' If the passages teach that he was made literally 'sin,' that he was made literally a 'curse,' that he literally bore the 'iniquity' of men, then the language of Luther was proper language, for the views which he expressed are but the fair application of such an interpretation. For if he was '*sin,*' and a '*curse,*' and '*bore iniquity*' in a literal sense, then no reason can be given why the *language* which properly denotes those who are sinners should not be applied to him as was done by Luther. In fact, Luther, from his boldness and consistency, did what others holding the same views are afraid to do. He shrank from nothing: nothing in danger; nothing in regard to his own reputation; nothing in the terms which he applied to others who differed from him; and nothing in the words to be employed in expressing what he believed to be the true teaching of the word of God. That men holding the views of a literal imputation of sin to the Redeemer, and the doctrine that he endured the literal penalty of the law, do not now use that language, is to be traced to the heart, and not to the head,—to their feelings, and not to their logic. Their piety revolts at the conclusions to which they would fairly be conducted by their premises. Luther's did not.

2. It would follow, if these passages were not susceptible of such an interpretation as that above suggested, that there was a real transfer of *sin* to the

Redeemer. If it was literally true that he was made 'sin,' that he was a 'curse' for us, that he bore 'iniquity,' then it would follow that there was a *transfer* of criminality to him,—that he became so *identified* with sinners for whom he died that he was properly and justly regarded as a sinner. It would follow that he was not treated *as if* he had been a sinner, but that to all intents and purposes he was regarded and treated *as* a sinner, or as *deserving* all that came upon him. It is not easy to see how this conclusion could be avoided, or how we could escape the absurdity of holding in words—what no man can really believe in fact—that a transfer of moral character actually took place.

3. It would follow, further, that those for whom he died could not themselves be held and regarded as *guilty*. If there has been a *transfer* of their guilt, it is no longer their own, and they cannot be responsible. Two persons cannot be held responsible for the same offence. If a debt has been paid by a friend, it cannot be demanded of him who originally contracted it. If one could be substituted in the place of another in a penitentiary, and serve out the term of punishment assigned to the original offender, the offender could not be again imprisoned for the crime. If a man who is 'drafted' for military service procures a substitute who is accepted, *he* cannot be made to serve if the substitute dies of disease or is killed in battle. And so, if Christ was literally made 'sin' and a 'curse;' if he took literally upon himself the sins of men and paid the penalty of the law; if there was a real *transfer* of the whole

matter to him, then it would follow that those whose place he took could no longer be held to be guilty.

4. With equal clearness it would follow that they could not be required to *repent* of the sin which they had committed. If the whole matter is transferred and cancelled, then it is clear that there can be no reason why *they* should repent, or, indeed, why there should be any repentance in the case. Repentance is not a thing required by law, for no law makes provision for it; and if all the penalty due to the sin has been borne, then there is no occasion for it and there would be no propriety in it. At all events, *if* there was a necessity for repentance in any view of the matter, the demand would be on the *substitute*, since he has undertaken to meet *all* the demands of justice in the case.

5. It would follow that he who became the substitute for the sins of men must be *conscious* of guilt himself and feel the *remorse* that springs from crime. Remorse and consciousness of guilt go with guilt itself, and are indissolubly connected with it; and if there has been a transfer of guilt, then there must also be a transfer of the consciousness of guilt and of the feeling of remorse, for these are parts of the penalty of the law.

6. On the whole, therefore, according to this view, there would be utter confusion in all our notions of justice and of right. Every thing would be unsettled. All that has been regarded as fixed and determined in the minds of men in respect to the impossibility of transferring moral character; to the language properly applicable to guilt and innocence; to the connection between a personal offence and

repentance; between guilt and the consciousness of guilt, and between guilt and remorse, would be utterly confounded. All the lines which God, in our very nature, has drawn between guilt and innocence, and which are so essential in the administration of justice, would be obliterated; and, if these principles were universally adopted, all government in a family, in a state, or in the universe at large, would come to an end; for a just government *cannot* be administered except it be an admitted principle that moral character cannot be transferred; that ill desert cannot be made over to another; that repentance can be properly required only of the offender himself; and that an appeal may be made to the consciousness of guilt and to the inflictions of remorse, in recovering offenders and inducing them to obey law.

IV. This substitution consisted essentially in the blood of the Redeemer; that is, in the sacrifice of his life.

(1.) The doctrine of the New Testament on this point is unequivocal. Luke xxii. 20: "This cup is the new testament *in my blood*, which is shed for you." Col. i. 20: "Having made peace through the blood of his cross." Heb. ix. 12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. x. 19: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." 1 Peter i. 2: "Elect . . . unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 John i. 7: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Rev. v.

9: "Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood." Rev. vii. 14: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white [pure] in the blood of the Lamb." Eph. ii. 13: "Ye, who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." 1 Peter i. 18, 19: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Acts xx. 28: "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Rom. iii. 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Eph. i. 7: "We have redemption through his blood." See also Col. i. 14; Heb. ix. 12, xiii. 12; Matt. xiv. 24.

(2.) The doctrine of the Hebrews was, that the blood is the seat of life, or that the life is in the blood; and hence to shed blood became synonymous with taking life. Gen. ix. 6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Lev. xvii. 11: "The life of the flesh is in the blood." Gen. ix. 4: "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Compare also Lev. xix. 26; Deut. xii. 23; 1 Sam. xiv. 34. This was also the opinion of the ancient Parsees and Hindoos. Homer also often speaks of blood as the seat of life, as in the expression *πορφύρεος θάνατος*, or *purple death*. And Virgil thus speaks of *purple life*:—

"Purpuream vomit ille animam."—*Æneid*, ix. 349.

Empedocles and Critias, among the Greek philosophers, also embraced this opinion. Not a few, also, among the most eminent modern physiologists have

embraced the same doctrine. Harvey—to whom we are indebted for a knowledge of the true doctrine of the circulation of the blood—fully believed it. Hoffman and Huxham believed it. Dr. John Hunter fully adopted the belief, and sustained it by a great variety of considerations. (See Good's Book of Nature, pp. 102–108, ed. New York, 1828.) This was undoubtedly the doctrine of the Hebrews; and hence with them “to shed blood” was a phrase signifying to kill. Hence the efficacy of sacrifices was supposed to consist in the blood—that is, in the life—of the victim.

(3.) It followed from this view, that the Hebrews spoke indifferently of shedding blood or taking life. Hence in the New Testament our redemption is indifferently said to be by the blood of the Redeemer shed for us, or by his life given for us. 1 John iii. 16: “Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us.” John x. 15: “I lay down my life for the sheep.” Matt. xx. 28: “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” John x. 11: “The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

The plain doctrine of the New Testament, therefore, is, that the blood of Christ—that is, that the giving of his life—was the means of making the atonement, or of securing reconciliation between man and his Maker. In other words, his life was regarded as a sacrifice in the place of sinners, by means of which the penalty of the law which man had incurred might be averted from him. The voluntary death of the Redeemer in the place of

man had such an efficacy that man, on account of that, might be saved from the punishment which he had deserved, and treated *as if* he had not sinned. This is the doctrine of the atonement.

V. The other point to be illustrated, in order to the completeness of the argument, is, that the avails of the suffering and death of the Redeemer may become ours, or may be the proper ground of our salvation; that is, they may constitute a public and sufficient reason why God should treat a sinner as if he were righteous.

In illustration and proof of this, the following remarks may be made.

(1.) Nothing is more common than that one may so avail himself of what another has suffered or done as to secure the same result as if he had himself done or suffered it. That is, on account of the merit of another, or the claim to public confidence or gratitude of another, he may be treated *as if* that merit and that claim were his own. By natural or constituted relationship, or by express permission, or by the regular course of events under the laws of Divine Providence, we are placed on an elevation as favourable as if we had ourselves been the actors or sufferers, or as if the claim to confidence and gratitude were the fruit of our own virtues or public services. There is, indeed, in such a case no transfer of moral character. There is no confounding of identity. There is no annihilation of individuality. There is no actual detaching the real merit, the real credit, from one, and attributing it to another. There is no mistake in supposing for a moment that the merit is ours, and there is no injustice in so con-

founding persons and facts as to withhold the real praise from him to whom it is due. There is merely a position gained,—an advantage realized,—a treatment secured,—*as if* the merit were ours, or *as if* the service had been rendered by us.

A young man commences business. He has, as yet, no capital of his own, no public character, no credit. But he has a father or a friend who *has* a name, and who *has* the deserved confidence of the community. As an eminent merchant, he has secured that confidence by a long life of integrity. He is known to be a sufficient security for any amount of capital that the young man may need, and the young man is permitted to use his name in procuring that capital from a bank; and, in addition to this, he enters on life with the warm and full commendation of his father or friend. In this case, the reputation, the character, the standing, of him whose name he is permitted to use, become available to him in the outset of life in the same manner and to the same extent *as if* they were his own. It is true that he may forfeit this confidence by misconduct, and just as true is it that he *might* do this if it were founded on his own character; but *until* such an act occurs he may avail himself of the name of another *as if* this claim to confidence were his own.

From this well-understood law society derives many advantages. The arrangement binds a community together. It aids those who are starting on life. It gives increased value to a character for integrity that it *may* thus be made available for the good of others. It multiplies and diffuses the benefits of a well-earned reputation, and furnishes a

stimulus for securing such a reputation. But for this, it would be difficult to start on life; but for this, it would be impossible to conduct the affairs of business with safety. The *principle* lies at the foundation of all the commercial transactions of the world, and is one that would be found to enter into nearly all the arrangements of life.

And this is as true of the effect of suffering as it is of integrity and virtue. We avail ourselves of the benefit of the sufferings of others *as if* those sufferings had been our own. At every moment of our lives we are enjoying the avails of the sacrifices and self-denials of those who have gone before, as really, and, so far as appears, to the same extent, as if they had been our own.

This is true in regard to the privations, perils, and toils of patriots. We enjoy the avails of those privations, perils, and toils as really as if they had been our own, and as really as the patriots who bled would have done had their lives been lengthened out to our times. Except in the honour of the achievements, in the fame which is the result of their personal valour, in the grateful remembrance which they now receive for their services to their country, it does not appear that they would have enjoyed any more advantages from their valour and their triumphs than we do. Their deeds are not, indeed, *imputed* to us. They are never reckoned as in any sense ours. There is no transfer of character or of honour. There is no confounding of identity. There is no confusion in the estimate which is formed in regard to meritorious services. But in respect to the *results* we are regarded and

treated *as if* all that valour, self-sacrifice, peril, and skill in battle had been ours.

The same thing is also true in respect to the sufferings of martyrs. We enjoy the avails of all those sufferings as though they had been our own. It is true that we have not been laid on the rack; that we have not been imprisoned, scourged, stoned; that we have not been bound to a stake or stretched on a cross; that we have not been thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre; and it is true also that in the estimate of moral character and real worth there is no confusion of character, no transfer of moral worth; but in regard to all that is valuable in the religion for which they suffered, we enjoy the avails of their sufferings as really as they would themselves have done had their lives been prolonged to the present hour. It is impossible to conceive how the martyrs themselves *could* have enjoyed it more in this respect than we are permitted to do; or how, if we had been ourselves the sufferers, we could have been more benefited than we are now.

The principle, therefore, that we may avail ourselves of the sufferings and trials of others for our own benefit, or may be treated *as if* those sufferings and trials were our own, enters into the very structure of all social life. It is difficult to see why, under a law that is so universal in reference to our fellow-men, it may not also be a principle in the Divine administration in reference to the toils and sufferings of the Redeemer.

(2.) The principle of 'supererogation,' or of doing more than is required by the exact demands of law, and, therefore, of doing that which may be made

available to others, is one that undoubtedly enters into all just notions of the atonement; and it is proper to inquire whether *this* is a principle that is found anywhere in human society or in the arrangements of Providence. It cannot be doubted that it is an elementary idea in the work of Christ that his whole work was voluntary; that what he did was done wholly on the account of others; that he was not himself bound, by any claims of law or justice, to undertake the work which he performed, or to endure the sorrows connected with it; and that, therefore, the avails of his work may become the ground of acceptance of those who have no merit of their own, and who are unable to repair the evils of a violated law. It is implied in the work of the atonement that the Redeemer could do, and did do, more than was demanded of him by any claim of law or justice; and that the avails of what he did may and do become ours.

The inquiry now is, whether this principle is one that is admissible, and whether the Scriptures teach that this is a recognised principle in the work of redemption.

(a.) The principle is recognised among men. It exists in the case of service rendered to another. Even in the worst form of service among men—that of slavery—this occurs. Nothing is more common than to assign a *task* to a slave,—a task which may fall far short of the entire occupancy of his time; and it is very conceivable that a slave may perform *more* than the assigned task, or may accomplish more for his master than was demanded of him. Though from the conditions of slavery, in which a

slave is always regarded as not his own, but as the property of his master,—as having no right to his own time, to the avails of his own labour, to his own services, or to *property* of any kind,—he could *claim* nothing as his own, yet, in fact, it may occur that he may have a portion of time not demanded in the service of his master, and that the avails of that *may* be appropriated as his own. This is strictly a work of supererogation; and the avails of that work may be appropriated, at his pleasure, to the benefit of any other whom he chooses to designate. It may go to relieve a fellow-servant not favoured as he is; or to purchase the freedom of his own wife and children, or the freedom of a friend, or his own freedom. Beyond all the actual demands on himself, it may be *set over* to such an account as he shall designate, and may be appropriated to the good of others.

The same is true of one who is employed as a day-labourer, or by the month, or on a yearly salary. There may be a service in each case which can be rendered to his employer beyond any thing expressly demanded in the contract, and for which he may properly expect a reward. Beyond his immediate occupation, he may have skill in some other department that his employer may avail himself of, and for which he has a right to expect an additional reward. A day-labourer *may* be a good accountant, and his service in that respect might be of great value to his employer, though that employer, from the terms of the contract which binds him only to labour on his farm, in his machine-shop, or his tannery, has no claim on this; or, in his unoccupied

moments, he may do much to embellish a farm, or to strike out some improvement in the art or handicraft-work of his employer that shall be of great advantage to him. As this did not enter into the terms of the contract, express or implied, the avails of it may properly be regarded as his own, and he will have a right to appropriate those avails, if he pleases, to any one whom he chooses. He may make use of all of those avails to instruct the ignorant; to feed the hungry; to clothe the naked; to ransom the captive, or to send the gospel to a perishing world.

(b.) We may suppose a case in advance of this, where there is *no* obligation of any kind, and where *all* the avails of a service may be appropriated to the benefit of others. A man who has ample means of support, and on whom, in that particular case, there may rest no obligation to serve his country as a soldier, may be willing to take the place of a poor man, with a large family dependent on him, who has been 'drafted' into the service. In this case he may not only relieve the poor man and suffer him to remain with his family, but he may appropriate all that shall result from the 'pay' and 'rations' of the soldier, as well as the whole of his portion of the spoils of victory, to that family, or to any other, as he shall choose. Though bound to serve his country when *called on*, yet in this particular case the whole work is voluntary, and is in the strictest sense a work of supererogation; that is, it is *beyond* what is demanded of him by any claim of justice or of law. *In* the position which he occupied, he was, indeed, bound to serve his country; but he has assumed a voluntary position, to which he was *not*

bound, and the entire fruit of that substitution of himself and his service for another may go to the benefit of any whom he may choose.

The *principle* of supererogation, therefore, is one that is universally recognised in the world. The error in the Roman Catholic communion in regard to the 'merits of the saints,' and the work of supererogation, is not in the abstract *principle*: it is in supposing that man may render more to *God* than is demanded of him; that in the service which he renders to his Maker he can go *beyond* the demands of the law; that he can himself *originate* a service to which he was not bound by any prior obligation; and that this may be garnered up, and placed in the hands of a priesthood, to be disbursed at their pleasure for the benefit of others. The idea is, that there may be some service of religion which is not *demanded* on the part of God; some self-sacrifice, some merit of fasting, of prayer, of pilgrimage, of seclusion from the world, of asceticism, which is covered by no command of God, and which may, therefore, be an accumulated treasure in the Church for the good of others. The doctrine supposes that there is a *limited* amount of service required by God,—like that in a contract with a hired servant,—and that all beyond that may go to the benefit of him who 'merits' it, or may be a part of a grand treasure to be placed in the hands of a priesthood, and to be appropriated, for a price, to those who are cursed with the consciousness of guilt, or who have a deficiency of merit of their own. The law of God, however, requires that a man shall love his Maker with '*all* his heart, and *all* his soul, and *all* his mind,

and *all* his strength;’ that *all* his time and influence shall be given to God. The Divine requirement covers all that it is possible for man to do; and consequently there can be nothing of a voluntary nature on the part of man, or that is originated by him, which can be regarded as a work of ‘supererogation.’ If a thing is right and proper in religion, it is that which has been prescribed by God, and which, consequently, cannot be of the nature of superabundant merit capable of being transferred to another. If that which is supposed to constitute such abundant merit be uncommanded, or be of man’s originating, it can be no part of true religion, and can constitute no ground of merit.

An atonement made by man, therefore, would be impossible; for no man could do more in the cause of religion than he is required to do by the law of God. No man has any time that is not covered by the law; any talent, skill, or wisdom, that is not demanded in the service of God; any influence that God does not require should be devoted to his service. If man performs any thing that is uncommanded and unrequired, it must be by the neglect of some duty that *is* demanded, or by the consumption of time that God *does* require to be devoted to himself, and therefore, whatever *appearance* of merit there may be in the case, it is in fact of the nature of sin. Man cannot substitute any thing in the place of that which his Creator has commanded; he cannot originate any thing of his own which will have higher merit than that which God requires.

(c.) These remarks, however, do not apply to the work of the Redeemer. His is the only case which

has ever occurred, or which could occur, where a service could be rendered which was not required by a fair application of the law of God, and where, therefore, there could be such an accumulation of merit, or such a work performed, that it could be made available to others *as if* it were their own. This whole work lay beyond the proper range and the proper demands of the law; and the avails of the work, therefore, could become the foundation of pardon and hope to others.

1. God was not bound to *provide* a Saviour. The whole work, on his part, was a work of benevolence. No claim of justice entered into it. By no fair construction of the work of redemption could it be inferred that God regarded the previous arrangements in regard to man as unjust, harsh, or severe; and by no consideration of justice or of law could he be brought under *obligation* to provide a Saviour for men. It is impossible to conceive that God would perform an act the fair interpretation of which would be that he could properly be regarded by his creatures as in the wrong, or as bound to make amends for the errors of the past. Man could at no time have approached the throne of his Maker and urged a plea of justice that he should repair the evils of the system under which the race was originally made, or by which he could have urged that the primitive arrangement was so defective in wisdom or benevolence that he was under obligation to repair it. An atonement could never have been based, directly or by implication, on an acknowledgment on the part of the Deity that the arrangement which made it necessary was unwise or unjust.

2. It is equally true that the Son of God was bound by no law to become incarnate and to undertake the work of redemption. We cannot conceive that God would require an innocent being to suffer in the place of the guilty; and if the Son of God was equal with the Father, or was in the true and proper sense of the term Divine, then there was no law which could bind him to undertake the work of the atonement, or to place himself in a position where he *would be* under law, either to obey it, or to suffer its penalties. There are laws of the Divine nature which will, of course, be obeyed by God himself; there are principles of eternal justice to which the Divine arrangements will be conformed; but none of those laws or principles go to the extent of a demand that God should place himself in a position where he would be under those laws of his own enacting which were designed for his creatures, or where he could be under obligation to meet the consequences which must result from the violation of those laws. The Son of God, therefore, could never be bound by justice to assume the form of man, to place himself under law, to endure any of the sufferings connected with the violation of law, or to perform the work which the law properly requires of man. Whatever he did in that respect was beyond the range of any *requirements*, and must have been a pure work of benevolence.

3. The work of the Saviour was in the place of others, and was for others. It was in no respect on his own account. As a Divine being, it was not necessary for him to undertake this work. He was perfect in glory and blessedness in the bosom of the

Father. There was not an act which he performed as a man to which he was bound by any original obligation; there was not a pang which he endured which could have been inflicted as an act of justice; there was not a trial or temptation to which he was exposed from which he might not have been exempt. Though *when* a man, and *as* a man, it was true that every consideration bound him to be holy, to be obedient to the law of God, and to be patient in his trials, yet the whole arrangement on his part was voluntary, and was designed for the benefit of others. He who should voluntarily assume a position by which he could render a service in behalf of others would indeed be bound to perform all the duties usually incident to that condition; but every thing that he did or suffered, however it might illustrate his own character, would be properly regarded as done or suffered for the benefit of others. Thus it was with the Son of God. His was properly a work which could not have been claimed as a matter of justice, and might all be considered as a work of supererogation.

4. It follows, therefore, that the avails of that work may become ours. We have seen that it was in our stead, or on our account; and it may, therefore, be ours. Incapable, indeed, of transfer, as all moral character must be; true as it is and will always be that the work of the atonement was made by him and not by us; and certain as it is that his merit can never be reckoned as really our own,—for God will always ‘reckon’ or estimate things as they are,—yet it is also true that we may be treated *as if* that merit were our own, and that we may avail ourselves

of all that Christ has done in honouring the law, and meeting its claims, and enduring such sorrows as would be a proper expression of the Divine estimate of the value of the law and the evils of disobedience, as though all this had been done and suffered by ourselves. This is, if I understand it, the true doctrine of 'imputation;' not that there is any transfer of moral character from us to the Redeemer, or from him to us, and not that God literally 'reckons' or imputes our sins to him as his, or his righteousness to us as ours, but that his work may be estimated as performed in the place and on the account of sinful men, and that in virtue of that we may be regarded and treated *as if* it had been performed by ourselves. On that account we may be justified and saved; for he has done more to honour the law than we should have done by our own obedience; he has done more to show the evil of a violation of law by his voluntary sufferings than we should have done if the penalty had been inflicted on us; and he has become the 'surety' for us,—the public pledge that no evil shall result to the universe if we are treated forever as if we had not sinned. This is the meaning of the Scriptures where it is said, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah liii. 5.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

THERE remains one point to be considered, not necessary, indeed, to the main design of this Essay, but still of great importance in the bearing which it has on the character and government of God, and on the manner in which the gospel is to be preached. It is the question in regard to the extent of the atonement, or the question for whom it was made; whether it is available for all, or is, in its own nature, or by intention and purpose, limited only to a part of mankind; whether it was designed to refer to mankind as such, or was intended only for the elect. The inquiry to be pursued in this chapter relates only to the human race; for, whatever may be its bearing on other worlds, there is no intimation that it was designed to secure the *salvation* of any other fallen being than man. For some cause unknown to us, so far as all the evidence goes, fallen angels were suffered to remain in their voluntary ruin, with no arrangement for their redemption.

In reference to the extent of the atonement, the sources of evidence must be the following.

I. The presumption from analogy;

II. The probabilities from the nature of the atonement, and from the rank and dignity of him who made it; and,

III. The testimony of the Scriptures.

I. The presumption from analogy.

The consideration of this point may be presented under two subordinate heads. One is the direct form of the argument; the other is the argument as meeting objections to the doctrine of the atonement, and especially to the doctrine of a *general* atonement.

A. The direct form of the argument.

The argument here will be derived from the remedial systems which we find as a part of the Divine arrangements on earth, and which in a former chapter* were adverted to as furnishing a ground of probability that an atonement would be provided for fallen men. The reference there made was to those natural arrangements which are designed to check, palliate, and remove evil, or, in general, to remedial systems found on the earth, which, it was supposed, might be regarded as preintimations that a remedy of a higher order would be provided for the removal of the ills that have befallen our race. Particular reference was made to the arrangements in the *materia medica* of the world, and to the healing processes *in nature itself*.

In reference to these remedial systems, as indicating by analogy what a higher system might be expected to be, the following observations may be made.

(1.) These remedial arrangements, though the knowledge of them may be in fact confined to a few, are of universal applicability. They are as

* Chapter v.

much adapted to one person as to another,—as applicable in one clime or in one age of the world as another. There is no limitation in the nature of the arrangement; nothing that would confine the remedy to any one age or to any one rank or class of sufferers. No aristocracy of position in dignity or wealth confers any special fitness for the favours which they are designed to impart; and no inferiority of station excludes from the benefit. The poor man burning with fever finds the bark of Peru as much adapted to his condition as the rich man; and the peasant with a broken limb finds the arrangement for the reunion of the fragments of the bone as efficacious in his case as it is in the case of the prince. Whatever may prevent the success of the remedy, the hinderance will not arise from any want of an original applicability to that case; for it may be always assumed that the laws of healing are the same in all men, and that the remedial system is adapted alike to all.

In respect to the healing art, the race is one. There is one system adapted to one race; and though the specific remedies for disease may be scattered in different lands, with a special adjustment to what may prevail in any one land, yet the *principle* is of universal applicability, and no distinction is found in nature in reference to those to whom the remedy may be applied. If this may be allowed to be an indication of what a plan of redemption would be, it would, therefore, indicate that the plan would be of universal applicability. The presumption is that such would be found to be the fact; and if this *is* found to be the fact, we see a new argument for its

truthfulness in its correspondence with what we everywhere observe. If in a professed revelation a plan of redemption should be proposed in which this was *not* a prominent fact, we should be at once sensible of such a departure from the analogy of nature as to constitute an objection to the scheme which it would not be easy to remove. Such an objection would be a constant hinderance to the propagation of the system in the world; for it would impinge on the course of events, and be contradictory to the arrangements existing in all the cases which would be regarded as in any way analogous to the purpose of redemption.

(2.) The remedial systems of nature are inexhaustible. So far as appears, there is no limit to the provisions made for healing disease. There may be cases where the remedy is not found out; there may be a want of skill in the proper treatment of disease; there may be medicines used which are not adapted to the disease which they are employed to cure, and which would only aggravate the disease; there may be a maladjustment of the parts of the system of healing; but there is no failure in the remedy from a deficiency *in the amount*. At any one period of the world, 'nature,' so to speak, has made ample provision for all that could be required in arresting the progress of disease. So far as appears, the supply is inexhaustible, and the human race entertains no more apprehension that the supply will be exhausted in reference to any future generation of sufferers than that the light of the sun, or the air, or the springs and streams, will be exhausted, or that the earth will become so sterile as to yield nothing

more to support its teeming millions of living beings. No cases of sickness, no forms of disease, exhaust the remedial provisions of nature. No case lies *beyond* the range of the provisions made; no case occurs, however new, malignant, or epidemic, which does not appear to have been contemplated in the remedial arrangement, or which is so pervading, so novel, or so obstinate that it cannot be subjected to the laws of healing.

(3.) Nature, so to speak, *invites* all men to come to its provisions. The sun shines for all, and invites all to receive its light; the music of the groves is for all, and invites every ear to open itself to its melody; the green carpet on the earth is spread for all, and invites all to look upon its beauty; the fountain flows for all, and invites all who are thirsty to stoop down and drink; the stars of night shine for all, and invite every mariner to guide his course over the deep by their teachings; the balmy air is for all, and invites all to inhale it. In nature there is no exclusiveness and no limit. Everywhere man is invited to enjoy the bountiful productions of the Creator's goodness, and one may feel that he is as welcome as another.

We take these undoubted principles and come to the contemplation of the plan of redemption. As a part of the arrangements of the same God, we should *expect* to find the same arrangement in that plan. We should be disappointed—we should feel a *shock* in our anticipations—if we did *not* find the same principles there; if we found all in nature free, inexhaustible, inviting, all in redemption limited, exhausted, and repelling. If there are such ample

provisions for man's temporal maladies and wants, we should expect to find provisions equally ample for his eternal necessities. In the arrangements of nature we think that we see unmistakable indications of what the Divine character is. We argue from that. Apart from any revelation, and back of any revelation, we form our conceptions of God; and we cannot think otherwise of him than we do. On deep and indestructible foundations our faith is fixed that the provisions of nature are free and inexhaustible; and with these feelings we come to the volume of revealed truth, and ask what are its teachings in regard to redemption. Shall we find a system equally free and liberal there, or a system narrow, limited, exhaustible? We cannot indeed deny that these previous anticipations *might* be set aside; and we could not impugn the Divine sovereignty if it were done. We must admit—we cannot doubt—that God has a *right* to bestow salvation, as he does health and property, on whom he pleases. We know that he may come into the midst even of these general provisions, and discriminate among men, giving health to one, and withholding it from another; saving one alive, and leaving another to die; making one rich, and consigning another to poverty; continuing to one the blessing of sight, and causing another to be blind. But the point of the argument now submitted is not this. It is, that, having made ample, full, and free provision for the maladies of men elsewhere, it is a natural anticipation with which man comes to the Bible that he will find the same thing in the plan of redemption. It is an obvious inference that the impressions which God

has designed to make in regard to his character in his works will be found to be sustained and confirmed in the provisions for salvation. We know that God might have made the world differently. We cannot doubt that he might, in his sovereignty, and for reasons unknown to us, have actually *limited* the provisions for human comfort to a part. We cannot doubt that he might have provided a remedial system only for a portion of those who should be prostrated by disease, or that a healing arrangement should have been made for only a part of the maladies to which the race would be subjected. We know that it might have been so arranged that new forms of disease would spring up, in the course of centuries, for which there had been no provisional anticipation; that not only the *materia medica* of nature would be exhausted in regard to existing maladies, but that for those new maladies no provision would have been made, and that, despite all human skill and wisdom, those maladies *must* carry desolation over the world. But that is not the point of the remark which I am now making. It is, that since no such arrangement is in fact found in nature, but that all such contingencies have been provided for, we naturally and properly look for a similar thing in the plan of redemption. In the actual arrangements of nature, as far as they go, we know what God *is*: we infer that the same arrangements will be carried out on the widest scale; and hence, by the analogy, we anticipate that the atonement, if one is made, will be arranged on the same principles of freedom, abundance, and invitation.

B. The analogy in these and similar cases fur-

nishes an answer to the objections which are made to the atonement itself, and particularly to the doctrine of a general atonement. The point of the remark now to be made is, that the same difficulties and objections lie against these arrangements in nature which are alleged to exist in regard to the atonement.

(1.) One of the objections to the doctrine of an atonement, which is often urged, is, that if God had intended that there should be an atonement made for sin, it would have been made at once on the fall of man, or, at least, that there would have been so clear an announcement of the intention, and so full a statement of its nature, that man could have availed himself of it at once. It is incredible, it is said, that an arrangement so indispensable for the salvation of man should have been delayed for so many ages, and that so many generations should have been suffered to go down to death before it was made, with no possibility of being benefited by it. Why, it is asked, should God suffer four thousand years to pass away before the great transaction should occur by which man was to be redeemed? Why should the generations of men, in that long period of time, be left in a condition so unlike that in which they would have been if the atonement had been made?

Now, to this objection the reply from the analogy of nature is obvious. It is that precisely the same thing has occurred in regard to the arrangements for healing the maladies of the body. With the same reason it might be asked why the remedies in the healing art were not at once made known to a

suffering race, and why so many generations were suffered to pass away before those remedies were found out and were made available to mankind. For any thing that appears, all the arrangements which exist now might have been as well made known in the first age of the world as to have been successively discovered by the slow researches of advancing generations. Vaccination for the small-pox would have been as effectual at first as it was when its efficacy was discovered by Jenner; and it may be asked, Why were numberless hosts of the human race suffered to die under one of the most fearful forms of disease before a check was put to its ravages by this discovery? The tree producing the Peruvian bark, for any thing that appears, has grown in the lands which now produce it from the beginning of the creation. Why were not its virtues at once made known? Why were multitudes of human beings suffered to languish and die under various forms of burning fever, when that which might have done so much to stay those evils, and to relieve human misery, and to save the lives of men, grew and decayed unknown, being of no practical benefit to mankind, and apparently created for naught?

It should be remembered, also, that the objection would be of the same force in regard to every thing which would promote human comfort and relieve human misery; every thing which has been stricken out by the discoveries of advancing ages and generations; every thing by which the condition of an advanced period of the world is made more comfortable than a preceding period; every thing in regard to health and happiness, to the arts and

sciences, to architecture and to agriculture, to navigation and travelling; every thing in which any one generation excels that which went before.

The objection would, in fact, go to this point, that *all* that could ever promote human happiness should have been made known at the beginning, and that nothing should be left to the slow development of ages; that is, that the world should have been made as complete at first as it ever will be, or that in the universe at large there should be no development or progress. But an objection that is so wide and sweeping as this is, assuredly, can have no solid foundation.

(2.) A similar objection to the doctrine of general atonement which may be met by the analogy of nature is, that it is to be presumed that if an atonement was to be made the knowledge of it would be imparted to all mankind. As all must have an interest in it,—as it must be equally necessary for all,—as all must be in danger of ruin to whom that knowledge is not imparted,—it would seem to be evident that a benevolent and just Being, who had caused the atonement to be made, would also cause the knowledge of it to be communicated at once to all mankind.

But to this objection a similar reply may be made. It is a matter of fact that the most valuable truths known to man, and those which are quite necessary to his welfare, are *not* made known to the mass of mankind. The time may come when they will be,—just as the time may come when the knowledge of the atonement will be communicated to all men; but as a matter of fact they are *not* thus made known to

all mankind. The truths which constitute science, properly so called, are known to but few of the race. The truths connected with the healing art are known to few. The knowledge of the most valuable discoveries and inventions is as yet confined to a small portion of the race. The knowledge of the best modes of agriculture, of the best style of architecture, of the mechanic arts, is, and always has been, confined to a comparatively small portion of the race. Indeed, there is no one thing that seems essential to human comfort, or desirable for the best interests of mankind, that is, as yet, not confined to a few of the human family. With an *adaptedness* indeed to the entire race, the knowledge of these things is in fact limited; and it is obvious, so far as the principle is concerned, that the same objection might be urged against this arrangement which is urged against the manner in which the knowledge of the atonement has been communicated to mankind.

But further: the objection, if a valid one, would not be removed until the entire race should be, in respect to all kinds of knowledge, and to all things that pertain to well-being and comfort, placed precisely on the same level. Indeed, the objection must go further than even this. It must go to the point that all the human race should be precisely alike; that no one should have *any* thing in health, complexion, beauty, strength, stature, property, raiment, friends, intelligence, length of life, which every other one has not also. But it is obvious that an objection which would lie thus against the whole structure of the world must be without any solid foundation. And it is equally obvious that if the knowledge of

the atonement is made to mankind on the same principle as knowledge on other subjects, it has this presumption in its favour,—that it is from the same source; that is, that it is from God.

(3.) A third objection to the doctrine of the atonement may be met in the like manner by the analogy of nature, while at the same time that analogy may furnish an argument in defence of the doctrine itself. It is an objection to the doctrine of a *general atonement*. The objection would be, that, on the supposition that Christ died for many who will not be saved, the atonement is so far a *waste*; that is, that he who made the atonement, to just the extent to which it would not be applied, endured sufferings which would avail nothing, and which benevolence required should not have been inflicted on him. To what purpose, it would be asked, were those uncompensated sorrows? Why should the Redeemer be subjected to sufferings which would be of no avail? How could a benevolent God give up an innocent being to sorrows which it was known would never be made available to the salvation of men, and which it was never intended should be thus available?

It is not needful now to inquire how far this objection is founded on a *commercial* view of the atonement, or on the idea that it was necessary that precisely the same *amount* of suffering, and the same *kind* of suffering, should be endured by him who made the atonement which would have been endured by those for whom he died; but the objection, even if that were the correct view of the atonement, may

be met by considerations drawn from the analogies of nature.

(a.) There is, in fact, much suffering in the world, and especially much that is endured in behalf of others, which *seems* to be mere waste, or which accomplishes none of the ends for which it was endured. Not a little, for example, of the toil of a mother, and the anxiety of a father, in training up their children, *seems* to be mere waste. The child nurtured with so much care is cut down by death just as he approaches the period of usefulness, and all the hopes cherished in his case are blighted forever; or he becomes early a victim of dissipation, and by his vices and follies breaks the heart of a mother and brings down the gray hairs of a father with sorrow to the grave. Much of the hard service expended in defence of a country's rights seems to be a waste. The liberty that is sought is never gained; and, after prolonged and dreadful sufferings, the chains of tyranny are again riveted upon helpless millions, and for ages the nation groans in hopeless bondage. Thousands bleed on the field of battle; thousands of wives are made widows; thousands of children are made orphans; fire and famine spread over the land; but nothing apparently is accomplished as a compensation for so severe and protracted sufferings. In like manner, not a few of the sacrifices made in the cause of benevolence seem to be mere waste. Hundreds of valuable lives are lost before there are any indications of success; schemes of benevolence, formed apparently under the direction of God, and prosecuted under much suffering and self-denial, are ultimately abandoned, and all

that remains to mark the effect and to perpetuate its memory may be the gravestones of those who have fallen in the field of toil and disappointment. If we should make an exact estimate of the suffering thus endured that *seems* to be mere waste, we should be surprised at the amount which the investigation would disclose; and, from the analogy, we should not be surprised to find that the same principle existed in the work of redemption.

(b.) But it may be true, after all, that this is in appearance only; for we may not have seen all the ends to be accomplished by suffering. Though it *seems* to be wasted, it may have bearings as yet imperfectly known to us, which, if known, would satisfy us of the wisdom and benevolence of the arrangement. We assume more than we have a right to assume,—that we know all that is to be known of *any* of the arrangements of God. We cannot take it for granted that his plans *may* not have ends and uses as yet unknown to us. We assume more than we have a right to assume when we say that the toils of a parent in behalf of a child that is early cut down by death, or that the sacrifices of patriots who are unsuccessful in the establishment of freedom, or that the sufferings of those who have laboured to spread salvation abroad and who die seeing no fruit of their labours are in vain. To be able to settle this point, we must take in the whole of the Divine plan, and see all the effects which may, by any possibility, grow out of such acts of toil, self-denial, and suffering. In each and every case the mere manifestation of benevolent feelings—the development and the display of character—*may be* a great object, perhaps an object in

itself sufficient to justify all the sacrifice that is made. It must be remembered that the display of character *seems* to be the main design of a large portion of the arrangements of the universe. Indeed, it is commonly held, and the position cannot be demonstrated to be an erroneous one, that the great and leading design of the universe is to display the Divine perfections. If this be so, then any thing that would exhibit benevolence, wisdom, power, or skill, would fall in with that general design, though it should *seem* to accomplish no other end.

(c.) But it should be remembered further that though the atonement may appear to be made in vain; though there may seem to be a superabundance of merit which will never be of avail in the salvation of men; though many for whom Christ died may perish, yet that even such a fact would fall in with what is undoubtedly the analogy of nature. How much is there in nature that seems to be in vain! How often does the rain descend on barren rocks or on sterile fields, where are neither man nor beast, to our eyes apparently in vain. What floods of light are poured each day on barren wastes and untraversed oceans, to our eyes in vain! How many flowers shed their fragrance and 'waste their sweetness on the desert air,' apparently for naught! How many majestic trees rear their heads in the wilderness, and stand there for ages in undiscovered grandeur, and then fall and decay, apparently in vain! How often does fruit ripen and fall in regions where there is no man to gather it, apparently in vain! What vast prairies have been covered for ages with flowers, apparently in vain! What mines of coal,

and diamonds, and gold are buried deep in the earth, so far as we can see, in vain! What mighty powers of intellect are created in each generation that remain undeveloped and uncultivated, or that are wasted in wild and visionary schemes, to our eyes apparently for naught! How many 'Hampdens' and 'Miltons' lie in 'village churchyards,' when far inferior intellectual endowments than they actually possessed would have been ample to accomplish all the purposes which they did accomplish in their lives! And how often do healing fountains run for ages before they are discovered, flowing apparently in vain, while thousands suffer and die for whose maladies their wasted waters would have been an alleviation or a cure! No one can stand near the fountains at Saratoga, for example, and not have before him an illustration of the very point now under consideration in regard to the atonement. So far as appears, and so far as we have any evidence, those waters have been flowing on a barren region since disease and suffering began. Day and night, summer and winter, those streams flowed forth in abundance, and apparently with no tendency to exhaustion, for thousands of years. Yet they flowed apparently in vain. No one knew of their existence or their healing powers; and myriads suffered and died who might, if they had known of them, have been kept alive. And even now what a waste! What vast quantities of those waters flow off and mingle with common streams, and make their way to the great waste, the ocean! Why did God make these fountains in the wilderness so long before they were needed?

Why did he not cause their healing qualities sooner to be made known to the suffering? Why did he at first—why does he now—create *more* than is absolutely necessary for the purposes of healing the sick? Why suffer these healing streams still to flow off on barren sands, lost as to any healing purpose, while so many suffer and die for the want of them? He that can answer these questions can answer most of the questions which are asked about the atonement,—perhaps can solve all the difficulties which press upon the mind on the supposition that an atonement has been made which will never be available to large portions of a suffering and dying race. How much like those running fountains is such a plan of redemption,—so full, so free, so adapted to the suffering and dying, and yet *apparently* so much of it in vain!

II. The presumptions from the nature of the atonement, and from the rank and dignity of him who made it, are, that it was designed to be general.

The atonement, in respect to the points now under consideration, is such as it *would be* on the supposition that it was intended to be applicable to all men. In other words, looking at the atonement as it is represented in the Scriptures, it is such that, unless there were positive evidence to the contrary, we should naturally infer that it was intended for all mankind,—as light, air, water, flowers, and healing fountains *appear* to have been designed for all men. Or, to express the same thought in another form,—if it were revealed that the atonement *was* designed for all men, it is actually such in respect to its nature, and to the rank and dignity of him who

made it, as we should suppose it would be if that were the idea.

This general thought may be presented under two subordinate heads:—the nature of the atonement; and the rank and dignity of him who made it.

(1.) The nature of the atonement.

I refer to it now as an exhibition of *suffering* in behalf of others; and the idea is that, as a general principle, all suffering in behalf of others is of such a nature as to have a general applicability, or such that any number of persons may avail themselves of the benefit. It is true that the purpose of suffering *may be* intended only for a few. It may be limited by express statement to a particular class of persons. A friend may submit to voluntary sacrifice for a friend, intending that the benefit shall be confined solely to him. A father may submit to toil and sacrifice for his children, expecting, and perhaps designing, that the benefit of his toil and suffering shall be extended only to them. A sufferer might state that his toil and sacrifice were *only* for a particular object, or to benefit only a particular circle of friends, and no one could doubt his right to do it. If such a limitation were found in the Scriptures in regard to the atonement, no one could question the *fact* in regard to the limitation of the design, as no one could question the *right* of the Redeemer to die for any portion of the human race that he might select. But if there *is* no such limitation, then it is right to argue from the nature of the transaction, and to see whether we can find any thing in it to determine the question whether it is general or is limited.

It is to be admitted that the atonement must be limited, and that we should expect to find an explicit statement of that fact in the New Testament, if the following ideas expressed the true nature of the atonement.

(a.) If it were a literal payment of a *debt*; for a payment of a debt could not be general; that is, the payment of a specific sum of money due to another would not be a transaction of such a nature that a third person could avail himself of that payment as a reason why *he* should be discharged from the obligation of paying a claim on him; and still less could it be the ground of a general statement that all debtors might be discharged from the obligation to pay their debts. The amount paid can be of avail only in the case where the payment was due. If, therefore, the atonement was a commercial transaction,—the exact payment of a debt due to justice by the sinner,—it could be applicable only to those for whom it was made; and all who embrace this view of the work of the Redeemer *must* maintain the doctrine of limited atonement, and all offers of salvation made by them to those for whom Christ did *not* die, must be based on falsehood and insincerity.

(b.) If the proper idea of the atonement is that the same *kind* and *amount* of suffering were endured by him who made it which would have been by those for whom he died, then also the doctrine of limited atonement must be held, and we should expect to find that doctrine plainly laid down, or fairly implied, in the New Testament. For the idea in this view of the atonement is, that there has been no *gain* to the universe, but that there has been merely

a *transfer* of so much pain from the guilty to the innocent. Whether the substitute or the guilty person himself suffered, the entire *amount* of suffering, and the same *kind* of suffering, have been endured which would have been under any circumstances. Of course, according to that view, the atonement would not be of a general nature, and could be made available only to those for whom this identical suffering was endured. The doctrine of a limited atonement, if this idea is correct, must be found in the New Testament, and all consistent preaching must be based on the supposition that no one can be saved except the elect for whom Christ died, and all offers of salvation made to others must be based on falsehood and insincerity.

(c.) If the true idea of the atonement is that Christ endured the literal penalty of the law, then the doctrine of a limited atonement must be true. For, in that case, all that the law demands has been accomplished; all that a penalty implies has been endured. But there is no such thing as a *general* penalty. The penalty of law pertains always to individuals. The demands of the law are demands on individual men; the penalty for violating law pertains to the individuals who do it. If they could themselves bear the penalty, they would have a right to a discharge; and if another should bear it for them, they would have an equal right to it. If, therefore, the literal penalty be borne, the transaction must pertain to the individuals in reference to whom the claims of the law have been 'satisfied,' and can be extended to no other. If a murderer pays the penalty of the law on the gallows, that fact cannot

avail to the acquittal of another murderer; still less can it be the ground of a proclamation that *all* murderers may now be acquitted. The murderer himself, if he should return to earth, could not be again indicted, convicted, and executed for the offence; for he has met *all* that the law prescribed as a penalty, and, so far as the laws of human legislation go, he is free. If a man who is sentenced to a penitentiary for a certain number of years 'serves out' that time, he has a right to a discharge. He has endured all that the law has prescribed in the case as a penalty. He cannot be tried and convicted again for the same offence. But the fact that he has borne the penalty of the law cannot be made available to the benefit of any other offender; still less could it be made the ground of a general jail-delivery, or of a proclamation that the doors of all the penitentiaries in the land might be thrown open and all convicts be discharged. In like manner, if Christ bore the literal penalty of the law, it could avail only for those for whom he endured it. No offer of pardon could be made beyond that; or rather, since the penalty of the law has been *borne*, and the law has been '*satisfied*,' there can be no *pardon* in the case, any more than there is 'pardon' when a burglar has borne all that the law prescribed as a penalty, and now *claims*, as an act of justice, a discharge. If this were the true nature of the atonement, then it would follow that the doctrine of a limited atonement *must* be found in the Bible; and then also, as in the other cases, all offers of salvation made to those for whom Christ did *not* bear the penalty of the law must be based on falsehood and insincerity.

I have endeavoured (ch. vii.) to show that these are not just views of the atonement; and if they are not, then the way is open for the inference which I am endeavouring to show necessarily follows from its nature. If, as I endeavoured to show, the atonement is (a) something *substituted* in the place of the penalty of the law, which will answer the same ends as the punishment of the offender himself would have done; (b) that it secures reconciliation between God and man; and (c) that it is a manifestation of the character of God to the inhabitants of other worlds, in showing to them how justice and mercy may be blended in the pardon of offenders, then it would seem clearly to follow that it may be *general* in its nature, and may be applicable to any number of individuals. So far as appears from this view of the atonement, the benefit might be extended to any number of offenders. It has no peculiar adaptedness to one more than to another. It is in this respect like the light of the sun, or like running fountains or streams,—adapted to all; like medicine,—applicable to no one class of the human race exclusively, but having an original applicability to *disease* wherever it may be found.

Thus it is with the sufferings of martyrs. The benefits of those sufferings are unlimited. Any number of persons, through any number of generations, may be benefited by their sufferings in the cause of religion. Those benefits flow over all lands, and will flow on to the end of time. So far as their applicability is concerned, they have no limitation; and so far as we understand the Divine purpose in permitting the sufferings of martyrs, there ap-

appears to have been no *intention* of limiting the benefits of those sufferings to any one class of mankind. But even though there should have been an *intention* of that kind, yet the might of those sufferings was manifestly such that the benefit might be extended to any number of individuals, and that the world at large, and to the end of time, might be made more happy by what prophets and apostles have endured. Indeed, we may suppose a real, if not a formal, *invitation* to go forth from every rack on which a sufferer has been stretched in the cause of religion; from every stake where the flames have kindled around a believer in Christ; from every prison where the patience and power of religion have been manifested by one who loved the Saviour, to partake of the benefits of those sufferings. For those sufferings were endured to show the reality, the power, and the Divine origin of the religion of Christ; to secure its establishment and perpetuity on the earth; to furnish examples of what it is fitted to produce; and all who choose may avail themselves of the benefits which have resulted to mankind from what those sufferers have borne.

The same is true in regard to the sufferings of patriots in behalf of their country. The benefits of their sufferings are limited to no class of men, to no time, and, in an important sense, to no land. This whole nation is reaping the benefit of the sufferings endured at Valley Forge, and the world at large may yet acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Washington; for his patriotic self-denials may yet be among the means of diffusing the blessings of liberty afar among the nations of the earth.

In such cases we should feel that a statement that the results of benevolent suffering were limited to any particular class, or that there were any who were shut out from the privilege of availing themselves of the benefits which flow from such sufferings, would be as much a departure from the arrangements of nature as a similar statement in regard to the light of the sun, to running fountains, or to the *materia medica* of the world. The idea of being originally applicable to one as well as to another; the idea that all may avail themselves freely of all the benefits which flow from them, seems to be enstamped on every thing. Why should we not expect to find the same idea pervade the doctrine of the atonement?

(2.) A presumption in favour of the doctrine of general atonement may be derived from the rank and dignity of him who made it. His rank and dignity were such as we should infer that they would be on the supposition that the atonement was *intended* to be general, but are not easily reconcilable with the supposition that it was limited. In other words, the doctrine that the atonement was general better *fits in* with that rank and dignity than the doctrine of a limited atonement; for it *seems* necessarily to follow from the fact that one so exalted was selected to make it, unless there is an express statement that it was designed to be limited.

If the sufferer had been a mere man, then it would seem necessarily to follow that the atonement must have been limited. It would be impossible to conceive how a mere man, however pure in character, elevated in rank, or lofty in virtue, *could* have such

merit that his sufferings could avail to the redemption of the entire human race, or could constitute a basis on which an offer of pardon could be made indefinitely to the dwellers in an apostate world.

If the sufferer were an angel, the same inference would follow. Limited as an angel must be in his capacity for suffering, occupying a rank far indeed *above* that of any man, but farther *below* that of a Divine being, it would be difficult to see how, on the supposition that an atonement could be made by him, his sufferings could have such merit that they could constitute a basis for an unlimited offer of pardon to all the dwellers in a fallen world. That is, it would be impossible to see how his sufferings could so express the Divine sense of justice; how they could so supply the place of the punishment of all these fallen beings themselves; how they could so become a security for the good order of the universe; how they could be made so effectual in bringing fallen millions to repentance and to holy living; how, in one word, they could meet and remove the difficulties which, as we have seen, everywhere attend the subject of pardon, that it would be proper for God, on the ground of these sufferings, to offer unlimited pardon to all the dwellers in a fallen world. It may be mere feeling, but the feeling is a very strong and a very natural one, that an angel could not be the redeemer of a world.

But we have no such feeling on the supposition that the Redeemer was Divine. There is no incongruity in the idea that he was Divine, and that the atonement was for all mankind. The one doctrine is adapted to the other; and if the one is true, the

other seems naturally to follow from it. We cannot but be impressed with the idea that one design in the selection of such a being must have been to guard against the supposition of any limitation in the case. And although we would admit the idea, on an express Divine statement, that there *was* a limitation, yet, looking at the rank and dignity of the sufferer, we could not but ask the question *why* it was limited to a portion of the human family.

To see the force of this remark, we may place ourselves in three imaginary positions, and endeavour to interpret the nature of the atonement from each point of observation.

(a.) We may look at the rank and dignity of the Redeemer as such. Supposing that he was in a true and proper sense 'God manifest in the flesh;' that in him 'dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;' that he was a strict and proper incarnation of the Deity; the question would be, what would be the proper interpretation of his work in regard to its extent from the contemplation of that fact. It would seem that there would be but one answer to such a question. The idea of its being designed for all the human race would be at once suggested by that fact; the idea of its being limited to a few would appear to be wholly incongruous with it,—more incongruous than the idea of limitation attached to a running fountain, to the air which we breathe, or to the light of the sun. It *might*, indeed, be limited by the express purpose of a sovereign God, for man has no claim to a pardon, even after an atonement is made, and God must in all things retain his right to bestow his favours as he pleases; but even in such a case the

idea could not be avoided that the limitation must be in the mere purpose of God, and not in the nature of the transaction.

(b.) We may look at the manifested character of the Redeemer. So far as this would be a guide in regard to the extent of the atonement, it would seem to be clear that it must be unlimited, or that he would be willing that its blessings should be imparted to all who needed pardon. In other words, if we take our views of the atonement from his character, and allow those views to interpret the atonement, we could not fail to come to the conclusion that it was designed to be unlimited. For in the benevolence of his character there was no limit or stint. There was no class of men for whom he showed any exclusive or especial favouritism. There was no class of sufferers who were excluded from his bounty, and no *portion* of any class. There was no act of his life which would imply that there was any limitation of *design* in imparting relief to the suffering and the sad; no indication of *exhaustion* in his capability of relieving those who were in distress and want. In respect to the blind, the only condition for receiving his aid was the fact that they *were* blind. There were no blind persons who might not freely come to him; there were no cases in which it could be supposed that there was any limitation of his willingness to heal them, or in which there was any indication that his power of restoring sight had been exhausted. In respect to the deaf, there were no cases so obstinate that he could not cause the deaf to hear; in respect to the lame, there were none so lame that they could not be

made to 'leap like an hart;' in respect to disease in any form, there were no cases so obstinate that he could not remove the disease in a moment; in respect to the suffering and the sad, there were none whose hearts were so deeply stricken, so crushed, so broken, that he could not give them 'the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;' and the numbers of the sad that thronged his path were never so great that he could not grant them relief. So of those whose hearts were crushed by the remembrance of sin. None ever came to him whose sins were so great that he could not forgive them; none so unworthy, so debased, so degraded, that he was not willing to receive them. If we go to the records of his life, and look at his acts of benevolence when on earth, and ask what would be *likely* to be the character of an atonement made by him, we should be at no loss for an answer. We should anticipate most confidently that it would be a general atonement. If assured that it *was* general, we should feel at once that this fact was in perfect harmony with his whole character. If told that it was *not* general, we should be conscious of a *shock* on our anticipations, and should ask at once how such a fact could be reconciled with the other actions of his life.

(c.) The same result would be reached if we took our point of observation from his sufferings. The idea here is, that the atonement, in respect to suffering, was such as we must believe it would be on the supposition that it was intended that it should have reference to the whole of the human race. In other words, if it is assumed that the atonement was

general, the sorrows which the Redeemer endured in making it were just such as they would be on that supposition. The whole transaction would be harmonious in respect to the design and to the manner of accomplishing it; for in contemplating the Redeemer on the cross we cannot but feel, in the language of Dr. Chalmers, that he "bore the burden of the world's atonement;" in the language of Isaiah, that "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us *all*," (Isa. liii. 6;) in the language of Paul, that he "tasted death for every man," (Heb. ii. 9;) in his own language, that "God so loved *the world* that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

III. The remaining point is, the testimony of the Bible in regard to the extent of the atonement.

(1.) It is declared in the Scriptures that he died for all mankind. Such passages as the following would seem to place the matter beyond all doubt; for the doctrine is expressed in them as clearly as it is in the creeds of any who profess to hold the doctrine, and so clearly that if this language does not convey the doctrine it would be impossible to express it in any forms of speech. "God so loved **THE WORLD** that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "God sent his Son that **THE WORLD** through him might be saved." (John iii. 16, 17.) Such declarations are as general as they could be made. It is not the 'Jewish world' which is specified; nor the 'elect world;' not the 'world' of wealth, refinement, rank, honour; not the 'world' of poverty, servitude,

and wretchedness: it is the 'world' as such, embracing all ranks, all classes, all complexions, all conditions. If Christ died only for a part of the human family, though that fact were known only to Him who gave him to die, then the declaration should have been such as to embrace that fact, and not such that its obvious interpretation would be contradictory to it and irreconcilable with it. Then the doctrine should have been expressed in some such language as this:—'God so loved the *elect* world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish.' But this is not the language of the Saviour in explaining the purpose for which he came into the world. It may be added further, in explanation of these passages, that they occur in a formal statement of the Redeemer as to the design of the plan of redemption. Nicodemus came to him for information. The Saviour intended manifestly not only that he should personally receive a just account of the nature of that work on which he had entered, but that, being one of the Great Council of the nation, he should be able to convey to that body a fair statement of the peculiarity of his doctrines. He gave to him, therefore, this statement of what he purposed to accomplish. He showed him that his religion was designed to overstep the narrow boundaries of Judea, and that he purposed that its benefits should extend to the whole world. It was to a Jewish mind a new idea that a system of religion *could* embrace the world, or that any could become the friends of God without first becoming Jews. These statements contain the first intimation with which we meet in the ministry of the Saviour

of that glorious feature of his gospel which afterwards became so prominent in his own preaching and in that of his apostles,—that the benefits of his religion were intended to be limited by no age or country; that the plan of redemption was adapted to human nature as such; that it was regardless of colour, caste, or rank; that it demanded, as the condition of receiving its benefits, only the consciousness of guilt and a willingness to accept of it. If these passages stood alone, they would demonstrate, by every fair application of the rules of interpretation to language, that the death of Christ was designed for the human race as such; that the atonement was for all mankind. But they do not stand alone. Such statements as the following show that this is the natural and regular mode of speaking on the subject in the New Testament:—“We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” (Heb. ii. 9.) “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John ii. 1, 2.) No language could express the universality of the design of the atonement more clearly or strongly. No rules of fair exegesis can make this language consistent with the idea that he died for a part only of the race of man. No one can explain the fact that, if the atonement was only for a part, the sacred writers should have used language so unguarded; so certain to convey erroneous views of the subject on which they wrote, and to deceive mankind on the most vital of all the doctrines of revealed

religion: language which, if the atonement *is* limited, has actually led, and will forever lead, a large part of the world into error.

(2.) On the ground of the atonement made by the Redeemer, salvation is offered to all mankind. The fact that in the New Testament salvation *is* offered to all mankind cannot be disputed. The only question that can be raised on the point is, whether it is offered on the ground of the atonement, or in connection with the death of the Redeemer. If it is, then that will settle the fact that the atonement must have had such a reference to all mankind as to constitute a basis for such an offer, or such a reference to all men that if they *should* believe they would obtain eternal life. In regard to this point, it will be admitted, by all who hold to the necessity and the truth of the Christian revelation, that no offers of salvation have been made to man except in connection with the atonement made by the Redeemer. If salvation could be offered on any other ground to one, it would be to all; and if it could be thus offered, then the work of Christ was unnecessary. God would not have two plans of salvation. He would not offer eternal life to one class without any reference to an atonement, and make the offer to another class in such a form as to involve the Redeemer in the sufferings of the Garden of Gethsemane and Calvary.

It should be borne in mind that when an offer of salvation is made to man it is God, and not man, who makes the offer. Whoever is employed to make the offer, it is as really his as though it were made by a distinct and audible voice from heaven.

Man has no offer of salvation of his own to make to his fellow-men; he can make none except as he is authorized to do it from on high.

Supposing, then, that the numerous and free invitations found in the Scriptures addressed to all mankind are actually the language of God, it remains only to ask whether God would make such a proclamation to those for whom no atonement had been made. Can it be believed that he would offer heaven to those for whom no heaven has been prepared? Can it be believed that he is tantalizing his creatures with offers which are insincere, hollow, and unmeaning? Can it be believed that he assures men that if they will accept of Christ they shall be saved, when he knows that Christ did not perform any part of his work with reference to them, and that salvation through his merits would be impossible? Not thus does the Eternal Father deal with men; and of nothing can we be more certain than that when he makes an offer of pardon he is sincere; when, on the ground of the gospel of Christ, he assures men that he is ready to save them, nothing can be more certain than that the Redeemer died for them.

It will not meet the case to say that the atonement is 'sufficient' in its own nature for all men if God had chosen that it should have been made with reference to all. So far as he may choose to apply it to any portion of the human family, when made, there can be no doubt that that right remains in him as a sovereign. And so, if he had chosen that the atonement should have been made for only a part of the race, there could have been no reason to call

in question his right as a sovereign to do it, as he has, in fact, made such a discrimination between fallen man and the apostate angels. But the point now does not relate to this question. It is this:—that the offer of salvation is made not on the ground of an original *sufficiency in the atonement itself*, but on the ground that it *had such a reference to sinners* as to justify an offer of pardon. So far as that offer is concerned, there is no difference between those who will be saved and those who will not be; between the elect and the non-elect. It is *not* offered to the one class on the ground that it was *made* for them, and to the other on the ground that it was *sufficient* for them though not intended for them. Of any such distinction there is no trace whatever in the Scriptures.

If there had been such a distinction in the mind of God, every consideration of sincerity and truthfulness required that all the facts should be made known; or, at least, that the communication made to men should not be so made as to leave a false impression. A number of men are captives in a foreign land. There is a settled price demanded for their ransom. A messenger comes from a man who is known to be able to ransom them all. They are told that he who has undertaken to ransom them is *able* to redeem them all, or that his wealth is *sufficient* for this. ‘All that may be very true,’ would be the reply; ‘but that is not what we wish to know. What we wish to know is, whether it is his *intention* thus to appropriate his wealth; whether the offer now made is based merely on the fact that he is a man

of wealth, or on the fact that the ransom has been so paid, or will be so paid, that we may avail ourselves of it. Is this proclamation designed merely to excite our admiration at the ability of the man of wealth, and to mock our misery by the exhibition of wealth which cannot in any way be ours? or is it made in good faith? Has his wealth been appropriated in any way to our release? May we avail ourselves of it? Or is it intended to release only a part, while there shall be, by the language used in the proclamation, a wholly erroneous view conveyed of the real character of him who *is* a benefactor towards a part, but who wishes to secure to himself the reputation, on false grounds, of being a benefactor in the largest sense? Who would tantalize miserable men in an Algerine prison with vain and hollow declamation about the vast wealth of some man in a distant land, or about the '*sufficiency*' of that wealth to ransom any number of Algerine captives, when it was certain that there was no intention of applying that wealth to their release, or when it was known that the arrangement contemplated only the release of a part? And yet does the doctrine that the atonement was '*sufficient*' for all, but was not *intended* for all, mean any thing more than this? If we should find it difficult to vindicate the conduct of a *man* in causing such a proclamation to be made, can we easily vindicate the character of *God* if he does the same thing?

(3.) It is a proof that the atonement is general, that it is made in the Scriptures the basis in proving

other doctrines. Thus, it is said in 2 Cor. v. 14, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." That is, on the supposition that one died for all, or assuming that to be an admitted fact, then, by fair inference, it follows that all were dead. Or, in other words, from the fact that Christ died for all men, the doctrine of universal depravity legitimately follows. On this passage it may be remarked: (a.) That the apostle *assumes* it as a well-known and admitted fact—a point about which there could be no difference of opinion, and which might be made the basis of any inference that might follow from it—that Christ died for all. He did not deem it necessary to go into an argument to prove it, or even to *state* it formally. The fact that Christ died for all, or that the atonement was general, was so well known, and so universally admitted, that he made it a first principle; an elementary position; a maxim. (b.) It is the obvious interpretation of the language used, that Christ *did* die for all men. It is the sense which would commend itself to any one on reading the passage, unless he had a theory to make out to the contrary. It is impossible now to express the idea of a general atonement in words more unambiguous. They who maintain the doctrine of a general atonement can find no more appropriate words with which to express their belief than these; and, as they use this very language in their creeds, it may with as much propriety be doubted whether *they* really believe the doctrine as whether the apostle believed it; for if these

words do *not* convey it, it would be impossible to express so plain a thought in human speech. So in similar cases. If a man affirms that *all* men are mortal, the obvious interpretation of the language is that the statement applies to each individual of the race. If we are told that *all* the passengers on board a steamboat were drowned, the obvious meaning is that the statement includes each individual on board. If told that in a case of shipwreck a raft was constructed for *all* the passengers, it would be inferred that it was for each individual; and it would be right for each individual, under such a general statement, to avail himself of this means of escape; nor could any one reconcile it with honesty or benevolence should he attempt to escape on the raft, if he was told that *he* was not included in the arrangement. If, in such a case, language like the following should be used,—‘We infer that if a raft was made for all, then all were in danger of perishing,’—the fair inference would be that the danger pertained to each individual in the ship; and if it should appear at last that the raft was *not* made for all, then, so far as the argument was concerned, there would be no proof that all *were* in danger of perishing. If we should be told that *all* the inmates of a hospital are sick, the obvious interpretation of the language would be, that there was no one who was in health; and if we were told that medicines were provided for all *because* all were sick, we should infer that the healing arrangement contemplated each one in the hospital, and that each one might avail himself of it. Just such as this is

the argument of the apostle, that it is proper to infer *because* Christ died for all that all were dead. The one fact, that Christ died for all, is commensurate with the other, that all were dead in sin. (c.) If this interpretation is not correct, then the passage affords a case of false reasoning. The proof of universal depravity on which the apostle relies is, that Christ died for all:—"If one died for all, *then* were all dead." But let it be supposed that the apostle believed that Christ did *not* die for all; that he died only for a part,—for the elect portion of mankind, and that the atonement was limited in its nature and intention to them: then what must have been the *real* fact in the case as it lay in his mind, and what must have been the form of the argument if it had been put into words? It would have been such as the following:—"Christ died for the elect: *therefore* all men are dead in sin.' Such reasoning would be of the same nature as the following:—"Medicine is provided for a part of an army, *therefore* all in the army are sick; pardon is offered to a *part* of mankind, *therefore* all are guilty; arrangements were made to save a part of the crew on board a ship, *therefore* all were in danger.' Paul never reasoned in this way. He undoubtedly believed that Christ died for all mankind; and on the ground of that he inferred that all men needed such an atonement, for that all were dead in sin.

(4.) The next point in proof that Christ died for all men is, that it is expressly said that some for whom he died will perish, thus showing that he died for some who are not of the 'elect' and who will not be ultimately benefited by his death. Thus in

2 Peter ii. 1:—"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." In the expression 'the Lord that bought them,' there is, by fair interpretation, undoubted reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. When the word '*bought*' occurs elsewhere in the New Testament with reference to redemption, the allusion is to him. Thus, in 1 Cor. vi. 20: "For ye are bought with a price;" in 1 Cor. vii. 23: "Ye are bought with a price." So the corresponding word *purchase*: (Acts xx. 28:) "Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." So also the word *redeem*:—1 Peter i. 18, 19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Rev. v. 9: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." In the passage now under consideration, it is affirmed of the 'teachers' referred to, that, *though* they had been bought, they would deny the Lord who had made the purchase, and would bring ruin upon themselves. There could not be a more unequivocal declaration that some for whom Christ died would perish, and consequently that the atonement must have been made for some who would not be saved. The case is similar to the following. An American citizen is made a captive. The price that is demanded for his ransom is paid by the consul, and he is told that he may go at liberty and return to his

native land. He refuses; disowns all allegiance to his country; scorns the interposition of the consul; enlists in the armies of the foreign power; makes war on his own country, and is ultimately slain in battle, and 'brings upon himself swift destruction.' So he who embraces error; he who denies his Saviour; he for whom Christ died. He rejects his claims and his offers; throws in his influence with the enemies of the Saviour; is found among those enemies, and perishes, bringing upon himself swift destruction, though Christ died for him, and though he might have been saved.

(5.) Another argument may be derived from the fact that the atonement is found to be ample for all. For eighteen hundred years the offer of salvation has been made to mankind on the ground of the atonement. All classes and conditions of men; men of every complexion and in every condition of life, have applied to God for pardon on the ground that Christ died for them. *Not one who has urged that ground of appeal has been rejected.* It is susceptible of all the proof that the case will admit of, that not one sinner has ever been rejected on the ground that the atonement was not made for him, or that its efficacy had been exhausted. Not one has gone to God with a broken heart and been 'sent empty away;' not one has come to the cross and been told that the blood that was shed there was shed for others, not for him. Thousands of the profane have been pardoned through the blood of Christ, and not one profane man has been told that his blood was not shed for him; thousands of the intemperate

have been saved, and not one intemperate man has been repelled because the blood of the atonement was not shed for him; thousands of the gay, the proud, the unbelieving, have been made sensible of their sins, and have supplicated pardon on the ground that Christ died for them, and not one has been rejected on the ground that Christ did *not* die for them; and should millions more of the same classes come, they would find the fountain that is 'set open for sin and uncleanness' as full as ever, and would be as welcome as those were who went before them. For in the gospel there are no symptoms of decay or exhaustion; there are no indications that it is losing its power; there are no evidences that the streams of salvation will ever be dried up. Of the profane man it is just as certain now that he may be forgiven as it was of the first scoffer that made an application for salvation; and the fact that the first one who made the application *was* forgiven, constitutes the fullest demonstration that all who come with the same spirit will be accepted and saved. Of the proud or the unbelieving man it is just as certain that he may be pardoned as it was of the first proud man that was humbled before the cross, or the first infidel that came and sought mercy through the atonement; and the fact that *they* were saved is a proof that all of the same character may be saved also. Of the worldly and the vain it is as certain that they may be saved as it was that the first worldly and vain sinner might be; and the fact that the first was saved is a proof that all of the same character now may be. Of the guilty female—

the wanderer from the paths of virtue—it is as certain that she may be saved as it was of her' who washed the feet of the Saviour with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head; and the fact that *she* was saved is a proof that all, to the end of time, and in every land, who come to the Redeemer in the same way, will be saved. Of the infuriated persecutor now it is as certain that the merits of the atonement are ample for his salvation as it is that they were for the salvation of Saul of Tarsus; and the fact that *he* was pardoned will be to the end of time a standing demonstration that all of the same character may be saved. (Compare 1 Tim. i. 16.) The merit of the Redeemer is unexhausted by time. The stream of salvation never runs dry. As healing fountains flow from age to age, no matter what numbers apply for healing; and as they retain their power, no matter what the forms of disease which are healed; and as they flow in large abundance above all that is needed and is applied, pouring their streams on the sands of the desert, or mingling with other waters, so it is with the waters of salvation. The fountain ever flows, by day and by night, in seed-time and harvest, in summer and winter. It is ample for all that apply. It is unexhausted by the numbers that come, and by the nature of the maladies that are healed. It flows in large abundance above and beyond all that is needed, and though it *seems* to be useless or wasted, it is neither; for, whether men avail themselves of it or not, it is a standing proof of the inexhaustible and illimitable benevolence of God. It *will* flow on to the end of

time. When all the fountains that now pour forth healing waters for the cure of the sick shall—if they ever do—exhaust the source of supply, the streams of salvation will still pour forth their unexhausted floods over a lost world. Never till time shall end will the sentiment of the beautiful stanzas with which this Treatise on the atonement may appropriately close, cease to be true:—

“There is a fountain, fill’d with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

“Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom’d church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.”

THE END.