

THE
PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1821.

An Address of the Conductors.

The importance of periodical publications is well understood by reflecting men. The philosopher and statesman, the physician and divine, have recourse to them, as very convenient vehicles for conveying to others the views they wish to prevail in the different branches of science to which they have devoted their lives. A large portion of the information now circulating in the world has been derived from such publications.

They are powerful agents in the religious world. In the hands of errorists and enemies to the truth, they are destructive as the spirits of darkness, beguiling and misleading unstable souls; but in the hands of the friends of truth, they go forth like angels of light, on messages of grace and love, instructing the ignorant, consoling the disconsolate, supporting the weak, succouring the tempted, and encouraging all in the good ways of the Lord. A weapon of such potent efficacy it were treason to our Sovereign Lord to leave in the hands of his enemies. Christians in both hemispheres have felt it to be their duty to avail themselves of periodical publications as powerful auxiliaries in promoting that great cause of truth and righteousness which has engaged the best affections of their heart. In England "The Christian Observer," conducted by members of the established church, and "The Evangelical Magazine," edited by

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Episcopal clergymen and Dissenting ministers, have for a series of years been ably supported and extensively circulated. Blessings to England, they have powerfully maintained the interests of evangelical truth, and widely diffused the influence of genuine Christianity.

Religious Magazines have not prospered so much in this country. After a few years labour, they have been relinquished by their conductors. Various causes might be assigned for their failure. The density of the population in England and the arrangements of business, the result of time, offer facilities for circulating publications and collecting the avails, which cannot be found in a new country, whose population is widely scattered over an extensive territory. Literary men in England are less occupied with business foreign to the life of a student, than that class of society are in this nation; and consequently a larger mass of talents can at any time be put in requisition, for furnishing the necessary materials for a periodical publication of a religious nature.

The difficulties to be encountered in this country in conducting a Magazine, should not deter from the attempt. The best plan, in our opinion, for such a work, would be to commit it to a man of piety and talents, who should devote to it all his time, and derive from it his support. Such a man, properly qualified, consecrating to it all his faculties, aided by a number of literary

were the means of grace, which could never be effectual of themselves, but were made so only by the power of God. In the use of these means, therefore, he must look up unto him, and depend on him alone, to render them effectual unto salvation.

J. H. VAN COURT.

Philadelphia, Nov. 12, 1821.

Reviews.

FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

I have lately read with some attention, a new work, entitled "The Mediatorial Reign of the Son of God," &c.; and shall trouble you with a few observations which occurred to me on perusing it.

The author informs us, that he wrote purposely for the use of Students of Theology. No Christian will hesitate for a moment, in agreeing with the author, "that these men are an object of great interest in the Christian church." The love of truth at all times powerfully influences its possessor. The truth, as it is in Jesus, has a transforming influence upon all who savingly know it. It teaches them "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." And when we find the advocates of that truth exemplary in their lives for sobriety and practical godliness, we attend the more readily to any new discoveries they may have made in the illustration of gospel doctrine, or in the detection of error.

The author in his dedication informs the students of theology, "that he owes them a duty of love, which he endeavours to discharge, by putting into their hands the present publication;" and further adds, "that it is in fact, rather a sense of personal duty, and a desire to acquit himself to himself, than any other consideration which have in-

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duced him to trouble them with this production." He lets them know, that at one period of his life, it was his lot to get entangled in certain questions and speculations, which in his simplicity he supposed to belong to the system of Christian doctrine, and the settlement of which, he imagined, to be indispensable to the man who would preach the gospel correctly; and that this unfortunate mistake had led him into distractions, toils, and perils. No doubt the benevolent author, from "the duty of love he owes these students of theology," or rather his "sense of personal duty, and his desire to acquit himself to himself," will cheerfully contribute all in his power, to preserve these young men from similar distractions, toils, and perils.

In page 21, the author justly observes, "that the Christian church has often suffered fearful calamities from the rashness and incompetency of her sons." Now, that he will be able, both to preserve the students of theology, from distractions, toils, and perils, and quiet the fears of the church against being once more exposed by the rashness or incompetency of her sons, there is no reason to doubt, since he informs us that "he knew the gospel as well at fifteen, as he does now at fifty years of age; that he does not know at this day one principle of the Christian faith, which he did not know then," notwithstanding his entanglement in certain questions and speculations, and the distractions, toils, and perils, into which his unfortunate mistake led him. He declares, "he does not come forward to propose discoveries in Christian theology: he has not a discovery in Christian theology to make." This his Christian readers ought carefully to keep in mind, lest they should be led to draw a different conclusion, when meeting with such passages as these: "I have *discovered* in confessions, and creeds, and systems, &c. (he makes no exceptions) things which

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I never could find in the Bible, and which I am sure are not to be found in it," p. 22. "They will wonder at me, that I cannot see that confessions, &c. I shall wonder at them, for not believing that these instruments are wedges of division; that their necessary effect is to organize society into factions of hostility," &c. p. 437. "The Augsburg Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Westminster Confession of Faith, are the documents of my mother's degradation," &c. p. 446.

There are novelties not a few in the work under consideration. Nevertheless we are not willing to admit that the author takes new ground every where, even when he would persuade us that he is maintaining doctrines denied by Calvinistic writers, systems of divinity, &c. He seems to hold out the idea, that the value of Christ's atonement is not sufficiently admitted, and that the offer of the gospel is too much limited. We might, however, inquire, who of the reformers or their successors ever refused, that there is an intrinsic worth, sufficiency, or merit, in the death of Christ, for the salvation of all men, if it had been so determined by God? Who ever denied that there is an indiscriminate, free, and unrestricted offer of the gospel to be made to sinners of mankind without exception, wherever the opportunity is afforded? It is apprehended, that it would be difficult to find any confession of faith, system of theology, or sound Calvinistic writer, in which these things would be denied.

The author sums up all that he thinks he has proved through six chapters of his book, in "eight propositions, or grand principles of gospel truth," p. 74, 75; and it would be hard to point out any confession of faith, or system of divinity approved by Calvinistic churches, that would contradict a single iota contained in them. By them no

new idea is added to the common stock.

To us it does appear, notwithstanding, that there are some things exceptionable in this book, some of which we propose to notice.

In page 48, two questions are proposed to the reader's very serious consideration:

"I. Has Jesus Christ the power to verify his own commission, by bestowing on all mankind, that which he has commanded his ministers to offer them?"

"II. Is it the anxious desire and wish of Jesus Christ, that all should obey him and be saved?"

It is evident that the author intends to maintain the positive of both these questions. In p. 62, he hints that the righteousness of Christ is capable of saving the reprobate. In p. 68, 69, he maintains by consequence, that there is remission of sin in the blood of Christ for more than the elect. This is but skirmishing, however. In chapter vii. and viii. he comes to close fighting, and directs all his artillery against the doctrine that would confine Christ's atonement to the elect. He uses every argument in his power, to prove that Christ procured salvation for the whole human race; that his remedial righteousness is of the same extent, bounds and limits, as the transgression of Adam: p. 91. In p. 70, he asserts that election is no way connected with the merit of Christ's atonement; and in p. 401 and 402, he seems to be at a loss what to do with election, and renews a question, proposed in his *Fiend of the Reformation detected*, "What is precisely the use which the sacred writers make of the doctrine of election?" and complains that "not one had paid the slightest attention to that question."

The author inveighs with bitterness against the use of logic, metaphysics, philosophy, and systematic divinity, in theological discussions. Against metaphysics particularly:

he wages eternal war. He represents this science as an "infernal fiend, emerging from the bottom of Erebus and old Night, croaking an endless and unblest ditty," p. 109. Yet, strange to tell, he draws largely on all these. Scarcely a page in his book is found without employing them.

It is proposed to make some remarks on the author's views in relation to the above subjects, and, if time permits, on some other subjects which he has discussed.

His two questions, p. 48: "Has Jesus Christ the power to verify his own commission," &c.—It would be necessary, first, to settle the question, what is this commission? Or what does Christ command his ministers to offer to all mankind? Is it that Jesus Christ will save you, O sinner, embracing his salvation; believing in his name? Without a single exception, the missionary of the cross is authorized and commanded, to offer salvation to every sinner of Adam's family, to whom he may have access, assuring him, on the authority of his Lord and Master, that thus believing, he shall be saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." If this is the commission, as we verily believe it is, what does the author gain by proposing the question? But this does not seem to be his view of the subject. If we understand him rightly, he views it thus: O sinner, Jesus Christ has purchased salvation for you, whether you receive it or not! To us this would appear both absurd and impossible. *Absurd*, inasmuch as it would then be a salvation that does not save! That purchased salvation, for the sinner not receiving it, remains with the purchaser, entirely inefficient, and as to any purpose of salvation, he might as well not have procured it. It may be answered, however, that it may serve for other purposes. This would be one of the discarded metaphysics. It would be a shifting

the question of salvation away to something that is not salvation. We therefore dismiss it.

But the thing is *impossible*. Let us put it to the test. *Jesus Christ purchased salvation for all men.*—What is salvation? I speak not of every or any kind of salvation, but of that salvation which was purchased by the Saviour of sinners. This matter will be cleared by referring to his name, Matt. i. 21: "And thou shalt call his name **JESUS**, for he shall save his people from their sins." Is this the reason why the divine Redeemer shall be called A SAVIOUR, because he shall save from sin? Then the salvation which Jesus purchased is a salvation from sin. Jesus Christ purchased this for all men, that they shall be saved from sin, whereas some, yea many of them, shall die in their sins. Saved from sin, but not saved from sin! The thing is impossible. The salvation of our Doctor will turn out the salvable state of the Arminians at last.

"Has Jesus Christ the power to verify his commission, by bestowing on all mankind," &c.—Is this what will verify his commission? If the Lord Jesus Christ never gave a commission to any man to make such a declaration to sinners, as that he had purchased salvation for the final rejecters of that salvation, how could the bestowing of it be a verifying of that commission? A commission is verified by the granter of the commission furnishing the holder of it with sufficient documents to verify his powers, i. e. to prove satisfactorily that he actually received such a commission. Thus the Redeemer verified the commission given to his apostles, by enabling them, in his name, to work miracles, as an irrefragable proof that he had commissioned them. And thus his own commission from his heavenly Father was verified: "The same works that I do bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me."

Quest. II. "Is it the anxious desire and wish of Jesus Christ, that all should obey him, and be saved?"

We answer, 1. The question is not definitely stated. That Jesus Christ sustains both a human and a divine character, will not be disputed. Some things in divine revelation, are predicated of him in his human character and some in his divine. He was, indeed, more than a man, but he was a man. In his human nature, he increased in wisdom and stature. Of him, as a man it is said, "But of that day knoweth no man,—neither the Son, but the Father." "If thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." If "the anxious desire and wish," be applied to Jesus Christ, as a man, we might answer in his own words to his Father, "Not my will, but thine, be done." It might be the natural feeling, inclination, or dictate of humanity, which the blessed Saviour would nevertheless resolve into the will of his Father. And from the epithet *anxious*, applied to *desire* and *wish*, one would scarcely imagine it would, or could, be, at all, ascribed to the Divine mind, unless metaphorically, or speaking after the manner of men, and then it could be no proof of the author's sentiment. When it is said of God, that "he rested and was refreshed," who would reason that he had been weary, or was actually refreshed?

But, 2. Let it be applied to the divine character of Jesus Christ, as the Doctor seems evidently to apply it. We then reason thus: Either Jesus Christ has an anxious desire and wish, which is a part of his counsel and pleasure, or he has not. If he has, we are assured from undoubted authority, that his "counsel shall stand," and "he will do all his pleasure;" and so all shall obey him and be saved. But if this anxious desire and wish be no part of his counsel and pleasure, we beg to be informed what it is? And how

it is possible, that the almighty Jesus, our God and our Redeemer, who "worketh all things according to the counsel of his will," can have any thing that is not among the *all things*? and particularly how he can have a wish, an anxious wish, that forms no part of his pleasure?

The Doctor, notwithstanding his denunciation of metaphysics and logic, sometimes argues by syllogisms. Suppose, after his example, we try the following.

The counsel of the Lord Jesus Christ shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure:

But it is the anxious desire and wish, i. e. counsel and pleasure, of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all men should obey him and be saved:

Therefore, all men shall obey him and be saved.

Whatever the Lord Jesus Christ is both able and willing to do, shall be done:

But the Lord Jesus Christ is both able and willing to save all mankind:

Therefore all mankind shall be saved.

This we think sound reasoning, if the assumption or minor proposition in the above syllogisms be only true. This, however, we have reason to believe is not the case, because we are assured from the word of God, that some shall be eternally damned.

In order to get correct views, of what our glorious Redeemer is both able and willing to do in the article of salvation, it will certainly be better to examine the covenant of grace, than torture our minds with syllogistic arguments. The sacred scriptures reveal that covenant: "I have made a covenant with my chosen."

Jesus Christ was made man, and "was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law." How could this be? How could the second person of the blessed Trinity, be made under the law? We would be forever unable

to answer this, were it not for the covenant of grace. And it appears that this covenant itself would be utterly unintelligible, were it not for the doctrine of election. It is indeed all important to inquire, "What is precisely the use which the sacred writers make of the doctrine of election?" And by pursuing this inquiry for a little, we may remove the complaint of Dr. G. "that not one has paid the slightest attention to that question."

It will appear, upon examining the sacred writings, that election lies at the very foundation of the system of grace. The whole purpose of God, respecting the salvation of his people, is according to election. Rom. ix. 11. It is so essentially connected with that love which is the spring and the origin of the system of grace, that it is usually termed God's electing love. John iii. 16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." By the *world* here, we must necessarily understand the elect world, the objects of Jehovah's love, on whose account, and for the redemption of whom, God sent his Son. These are not the whole world, i. e. all the descendants of Adam, for some of these are hated of God—some who are not the sheep of Christ, for whom the good Shepherd gave his life—some for whom Christ would not pray. John xvii. 9. This is further evident, from the fact, that at the last day, Christ says to those on his left hand, "I never knew you;" but he expressly says, "I know my sheep." John, x. 14. This will still further appear, from Rom. viii. 29: "For whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate," &c. Whatever the word *foreknow* means, in the order of nature here, it precedes predestination. It cannot then signify mere prescience, because God cannot foreknow any thing, unless that thing is certainly to happen. Foreknowledge must be certain, otherwise it would be doubtful. But

doubtful, i. e. uncertain knowledge, is not knowledge. "If God foreknow any thing, that thing is evident to the Divine mind, i. e. the Divine mind has evidence of that thing." No evidence can be furnished from the thing itself, because it does not exist. The same thing may be said of every other thing before it exists. No evidence, then, can be furnished from any thing else. From whence then can the Divine mind possess evidence of the future existence of any thing? Only from his own purpose, decree, or predestination of that thing to exist. Simple foreknowledge, therefore, is posterior in the order of nature to predestination. But the foreknowledge in the text comes before it. Now, nothing can be before the predestination of any to eternal life, but that *choice of love*, which is the fountal spring of the whole appointment. We have a similar application of the word *know*, in the first Psalm, verse 6th: "For the Lord *knoweth* the way of the righteous." In as far as mere knowledge is concerned, the Lord knows the way of the wicked as well as the way of the righteous, yet the one is set in opposition to the other. The word plainly means, to approve, love, or delight in. So also in Matt. vii. 23: "I never *knew* you;" where the same verb is used as in Rom. viii. 29. In respect to the fact of knowledge simply, the omniscient Judge of the quick and the dead, knew the wicked as well as the righteous. But I never approved of you, I never loved you, I never delighted in you as in beloved objects, must be the meaning of the word. In like manner, those whom God foreknew, are those whom he loved before. More examples would be unnecessary.

Now this love, this electing love, this primary principle in the system of grace, is *in Christ*, who is also the Father's *elect*. Eph. i. 4: "According as he hath *chosen* us *in him* before the foundation of the

world." Not that he is the cause of their election, or that the choice of him is, in the order of nature, anterior to theirs. Indeed, "his election is subordinated to theirs, as a mean to an end." In their election they were given to him as a body to a head. He was to effect the purpose and end of their election. They were given to him to be redeemed: "Thine they were," says the Redeemer to his heavenly Father, "and thou gavest them me." John xvii. 6. They were the property and possession of the Father, before they were given to Christ, not merely by creation, for so were others as well as they, but by the Father's choice, the Father's electing love.

They are definite and fixt as to their number: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." 2 Tim. ii. 19. Those that are his by election, otherwise there would be nothing definite in the expression. Their very names are known and recorded: "Their names are written in heaven—in the book of life."

The covenant of grace is wholly about these persons. Here then is precisely the use the sacred writers make of the doctrine of election. They make it the very groundwork—the very matter about which the covenant of grace treats. The covenant of grace is a covenant of redemption. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer in that covenant. He engages to pay a ransom, a price, for those who were given him. Does he so engage for others that were not given him? Does he also pay their ransom? Election is not, with sound Calvinists, "a mere element in a metaphysical theory," but, according to the Bible, it is, indeed, an elementary principle in the system of grace. It also shows the value, but certainly not the imputability, of Christ's righteousness, in the covenant of redemption. The righteousness of Christ is imputable to those who possess it. There are indeed *elect* persons, but it is not

imputable to them; simply as *elect* persons, but as *believers*.

The responsibility of the Lord Jesus Christ for those who were given him, further shows the use of election in the system of grace. The sheep delivered to his care, as a flock to a shepherd. God the Father gave them to him, and will one day require them at his hand. "Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" Jer. xiii. 20. Then will he be able to say, "Lo, here am I, and the children that thou hast given me. Of all that thou gavest me, have I lost none." Here is the place to ascertain the value of Jesus' blood, the nature and the worth of his atonement. The abstract or intrinsic value of the blood of Christ, is a thing with which we have nothing at all to do. Who could form an adequate idea of that which is infinitely valuable? Jesus Christ represented the elect in the covenant of grace. In their name he engaged, and for them he became surety. He took their guilt upon himself; he said to the divine law, "If they owe thee aught," or whatever they owe thee, "set that to my account. In due time, I will repay thee." Unconnected with the elect, Jesus Christ appears not in the whole transaction. The covenant of grace embraces them, and no others. The value of the satisfaction of Christ was settled in the eternal covenant. It was to be accounted as worth, precisely, what was agreed upon, between the Father and the Son in that transaction. It is not its intrinsic value (though it must be, intrinsically, of infinite worth), but the persons for whom it is shed, those whom Christ represented in the shedding of it, that will show the extent of its worth in the everlasting covenant. It is worth all that the law requires, for them, or in their behalf, but it is of no value at all in the covenant, for those who are not recognised in that covenant.

The broken law had equal claims

upon all the human family. Does Jesus represent them all in the covenant of redemption? If he does, then they are all redeemed. If he does not, then those who are not represented have neither part nor lot in this redemption. It is to them as though it had never been, in as far as redemption is really concerned. How then can that be imputable to them, in which they have no interest? But we forget that Doctor G. uses the word *imputable* in a sense hitherto unknown in the English language. If he explains his meaning, he may, however, be indulged in the oddity, as if one should say, I mean the Monongahela river, but I choose to call it the Mediterranean sea.

It is in the covenant stipulations, that we see the application and the bearing of the atonement. Jesus Christ made atonement for men. Atonement removes the offence, and restores the culprit to favour. Jesus died the just for the unjust, that he might "bring us to God." All those whose sins he expiated are brought to God. These are God's chosen. The principle of election is never lost sight of through the whole of his sufferings. If he is taken, those who are elected are let go their way.

The nature of angels he took not, and therefore he satisfied not the law of God for them. He could not represent them, not being one in nature with them. For this is the law, "that he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, be all of one," Heb. ii. 11: i. e. of one common nature.

But he did take on him the seed of Abraham. Heb. ii. 16. Two things are here observable.

1. The nature that belonged to the seed of Abraham is human nature. Jesus, therefore, took on him human nature.

2. It is not said by the apostle, "He took upon him the seed of Adam," but "the seed of Abraham." This would appear evident-

ly to intimate God's design of limiting the benefits resulting from the death of his Son, to a part of the human family. Independently of a restriction originating in Divine Sovereignty, intimated to us in this passage, as well as in many others, the merits of his obediential life, and satisfactory death, should have been not only imputable, but also must have been, in due time, imputed to all mankind. Then it is evident, that "the remedial righteousness of Jesus Christ would have the same extent, bounds and limits, with the covenant transgression of Adam," and all that were lost by the one would be saved by the other. As it is, Doctor G. attempts a comparison, in every respect, between the two (p. 91.) in these memorable words: "Therefore the remedial righteousness of Jesus Christ has the same extent, bounds, and limits, with the covenant transgression of Adam; the latter has destroyed all mankind, the former is capable of saving all mankind." The comparison is, however, not homogeneous. It is made not between destruction and salvation, but between destruction and the capability of salvation.

We shall not charge this with being either logical or metaphysical. It is far enough from either. The actual doing of a thing, and the capability of doing it, will not, generally, be allowed to identify. One man works, and another is capable of working: therefore, they are both alike. It is believed, that few would be disposed to admit this conclusion.

That the righteousness of Jesus Christ has the same "extent, bounds, and limits, with the covenant transgression of Adam," in relation to *all for whom it is wrought*, will be readily granted; but that it has the same extent, &c. in relation to others, certainly does not follow. Were we to present the reasoning in the form of a syllogism, it might run thus:

Jesus Christ undertook to satisfy, in human nature, for all the seed of Abraham:

But the seed of Abraham are part of the seed of Adam:

Therefore, Jesus Christ undertook to satisfy, in human nature, for *all* the seed of Adam.

Logicians have a name for this kind of reasoning, but no man covets to have it applied to his.

We learn here the precise use which the apostle makes of election, in this part of the system of grace. Abraham is called the father of believers. His seed are the elect, and the elect only. Such are the children of Abraham's faith. Rom. ix. 8: "But the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Gal. iii. 7: "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

Jesus Christ took human nature, having the satisfaction which he was to make in that nature limited by covenant agreement to the seed of Abraham. Abraham's seed are, in relation to this transaction, believers, and believers only. All the elect shall be made believers. No reprobate shall ever be a believer. Consequently, Jesus Christ purchased nothing for reprobates.

It is not disputed by Doctor G. that the covenant of grace is a covenant of redemption; that in this covenant Jesus Christ acted as a Redeemer. Whom did he engage to redeem?—The elect only? or all mankind?

This question, it is presumed, will be satisfactorily answered by attending to two things.

I. From what did he engage to redeem those whom he represented?

II. To whom, or what, did he engage to redeem them?

These two questions are fully answered in the sacred volume.

That, from which Jesus Christ actually does redeem his people, must be *that* from which he engaged in the covenant of grace to redeem them.

In Rev. xiv. 3, 4, we are informed that they are "redeemed from the earth," i. e. from among carnal, earthly men. Did he both redeem them from among carnal, earthly men, and redeem those men too? In Ps. cxxx. 8, we are assured that "he redeems his Israel from all his iniquities." Can all men, elect and reprobate, be said, in truth, to be *his Israel*, or to be redeemed from all their iniquities? The same truth is taught in Tit. iii. 14: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." It is evident from this passage, that the object which the Redeemer had in view in giving himself, was, to redeem from all iniquity, those for whom he gave himself. And is it not, on this very account, that the blessed Redeemer gets the name of *Saviour*, (Matt. i. 21,) "And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." The salvation which Jesus procures, is, primarily, a salvation from sin.

Are the reprobate as well as the elect saved from sin? If Jesus procured salvation from sin for the reprobate, how could he say of any "ye shall die in your sins?"

Again: Those whom Jesus redeems, he redeems from the broken law. Gal. iv. 5: "To redeem them that were under the law." Are all the human family thus redeemed? Certainly not. They only who are under grace, are redeemed from the law as a broken covenant. Rom. vi. 14: "For ye are not under the law, but under grace."

II. To whom or what did Christ engage to redeem his people?

1. To God. Rev. v. 9: "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God." To God as their own God, to the everlasting enjoyment of God, as their soul satisfying portion. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." Can this be said of such as shall never see God in mercy, but be eternally excluded from his blissful presence?

2. To what are they redeemed? To the adoption of sons. Eph. i. 4, 5. "According as he hath chosen us in him—having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." This adoption is from election as its source and spring: "According as he hath chosen us—having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."

It is by or through Jesus Christ. He, by his death, procured for those he represented, the removal of their alienation, and their introduction unto the family of God. Was all this arranged and settled in the covenant of redemption? And have reprobates any thing to do with it?

Here then is precisely the use which the sacred writers make of election in this part of the system of grace. It regulates and determines who shall be the children of adoption; and further, that all this is by Jesus Christ. He is made the elder brother, head, and representative, of this blessed family. He procures all their privileges. He obtains for them, all needed blessings. He redeems them from the curse of the broken law, and purchases for them salvation. Gal. iv. 5: "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Did the Lord Jesus Christ thus engage in the everlasting covenant? And what is there in all this for the behoof of the reprobate? What do we find here that Jesus purchased for them?

Again: The sacred writers make a precise use of election in relation both to the *end* for which those whom Christ represented were redeemed, and the *means* of obtaining it.

The *end*, salvation. 2 Thess. ii. 13: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." Salvation, in subordination to the divine glory, is the *end* for the enjoyment of which they were chosen. Now their

election is in Christ. He procures for them eternal life and salvation. Is there any thing about the reprobate here? Not any thing.

The *means* in order to the obtaining this end, *sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. These are qualifying and preparing means, of which the elect only will be the subjects. The decree of election contemplates the sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, as means for its own fulfilment. But is there any thing of all this contemplated, about, or concerning the reprobate? Nothing at all.

It is no wonder that Doctor G. endeavours to keep the idea of election out of view, in speaking of the righteousness of Christ. If it is to be equally applicable to all the human race, it is very necessary that election should not appear, or at least, should have nothing to do in the system. For the same reason, representative identification must be kept on the background.

For if Christ engaged in the covenant of grace for the elect only—if he represented the elect only, the ability and willingness to save the reprobate, so much contended for by Doctor G. must rest on a very precarious foundation. Will Doctor G. be so obliging as to let the world know, what is *precisely the use* of election in his own scheme of the system of grace? For our own part we sincerely think, that his system would be much more consistent without it.

Doctor G. informs us, p. 402, that "a number of modern theologians, make election the measure of the value and imputability of Christ's righteousness." We must beg leave to suspend our belief of this assertion until Doctor G. shall have favoured us with the names, and referred to the writings of some of these theologians. We believe it will be difficult to find any theologian, either ancient or modern, that "makes election the measure of the

imputability of Christ's righteousness." The righteousness of Christ is imputable to the elect, and to them only, but it is not, simply, as they are elect, but as they are believers.

In representing the righteousness of Christ, if not an "abstract righteousness, yet a righteousness abstracted from election, representation, or persons"—as being "the righteousness of the law"—"capable of saving all mankind," but not wrought out, or performed in the name and room of certain elect men, Doctor G. and the whole tribe of Arminians, will exactly harmonize.

The truth is, disguise it as you will, the systems of all these men come to this, that the Lord Jesus Christ satisfied law and justice, by yielding to the law, the very righteousness that it demanded. The idea of persons, or the elect, is kept entirely out of the question.

Now if this is not an abstract righteousness, I ask, in the name of common sense, what is it? Let us press this inquiry a little, and I think it will puzzle the ingenuity of the most subtle metaphysician to find in it a single idea good or bad.

What is the righteousness of the law? A righteousness which the law demands from those who are its subjects. These must be persons, and persons under the law. Jesus Christ never had a human person. For himself, he never could be under the law. On him abstract from representation, it had no claims. It could have none. He never could present the righteousness of the law, for the law must, in every case say to him, thou owest me nothing. I never can accept a payment where I have no demand. "This furnishing of the righteousness of the law, where the law has no claim, is therefore, impossible. It never could say in such a case, "pay me what thou owest," and if it were possible that the law could receive this payment, it would act contrary to law.

To say that a dollar is a dollar let it be paid by whomsoever it may, touches not this subject. The law demands a dollar, only from the person who owes it a dollar. It is evident then, that a supposed fulfilling of the law by the Lord Jesus Christ, without identifying himself with those on whom the law had claims, is incompatible with its very nature, would be a cheating of the law in its just demands upon its own subjects if pleaded by them, and if accepted, would be a violation of the principle of moral righteousness.

The righteousness of the law, as furnished by the Lord Jesus Christ requires, that there be persons on whom the law has demands—that these demands they are unable to fulfil—that Jesus Christ so identify himself with them that he and they be viewed as one in law reckoning, and that he, therefore, owe and pay their debt.

Did he in this manner owe and pay for the reprobate, as well as for the elect? Did he, for the sake of the reprobate as well as the elect, sanctify himself? (John xvii. 19.) i. e. consecrate himself unto the Lord a priest and a sacrifice without spot or blemish to make atonement for their sin, that they might be sanctified through the truth. Certainly not.

If these observations be correct, it will appear that there is a *precise use of election* made by the sacred writers, which never did enter, and which never could enter into Doctor G.'s scheme.

In page 396, Doctor G. proposes the following question: "Does Christ's righteousness derive any of its worth or merit from the dignity of his divine person?" which question he answers in the negative; and offers four arguments to prove that Christ's righteousness derives no merit from the divinity of his person. He, however, has observed, (for he is a man of reading) "that some of the ancients

had given an affirmative answer to this question, and that some modern authors give it a similar answer." What a discovery! Yet we might be permitted to ask, what Calvinistic divine before Doctor G. ever denied it? But the Doctor thinks he sees a cockatrice, putting his head out of his shell, and with the specific instinct of his nature, aiming a bite, before his fangs are grown, or his poison concocted; and therefore, he judges that it may be best to tread on him now, and not to wait till he shall have done some eminent mischief." This cockatrice reader, is the merit of Christ's *personal dignity* in the work of salvation! If it be a cockatrice, it is an old one, and long, very long indeed, has it been a hatching if it be yet in the shell.

The Doctor's four arguments to prove that Christ's righteousness derives no merit from the divinity of his person, are,

1. The idea is contrary to the scriptures.
2. Is absolutely inconceivable.
3. Is dishonourable to Christ.
4. If it were possible, it is not imputable, and therefore can be no part of his righteousness.

We cannot weary ourselves much longer in following up these arguments. The thing is absolutely fatiguing. Yet to pass them over altogether, might furnish a conclusion, the very reverse of what we intend.

On his first argument the Doctor asks, "What was the riches which Christ laid down, when he became poor?" "Of what did he empty himself?" He answers "it could not be his divine nature, for that is impossible—it could not be any perfection of his divinity," &c. He gives a reason why it could not be any of these, "because all the divine perfections inhere in the divine nature, and are bound together by immutable necessity." He answers positively, to the above ques-

tion, *it was precisely his personal dignity.*

Then, of course, this answer cannot, according to the Doctor, be liable to the above objection. And is it really true, that the personal dignity of Jesus Christ does not inhere in the divine nature? Can the second person of the holy Trinity lay down his divine personality? And is not personal dignity essential to divine personality? A divine person divested of personal dignity! Astonishing! I am afraid a cockatrice shows his head. Is not the personality of the Son of God essential to the very being of the Godhead? And as this personality is divine, is it not necessarily dignified? Our glorious Redeemer could no more part with his personal dignity, than he could with the divine nature. Even in his lowest state of humiliation and degradation, it was the imperative command of Jehovah to the highest class of created beings, that they should do him homage: "Let all the angels of God worship him!"

In one sense, the Redeemer had all the personal dignity he ever had. He was, even on Calvary, the "Father's equal—the man that was his fellow." In another sense, his glory was veiled, or he "emptied himself, and took the form of a servant." Bad as metaphysics are, they are sometimes useful, to enable us to make proper distinctions. Let us never forget the two-fold character of our glorious Mediator: Christian, let no subtle theory, no new invention of speculative reasoning, rob you of your Saviour God.

In the whole of this reasoning of Doctor G. no notice is taken of the penalty of the broken law—no notice of sin being an infinite evil. The whole tendency of this new theory is towards Socinianism. I tremble for the consequences. God grant that the author may be arrested in time, by the hand of mercy.

President Edwards has unan-

swerably demonstrated, "that, as sin is the violation of infinite obligation to love, honour, and obey God, it must be a crime infinitely heinous." The punishment must be according to the nature of the offence, for God is just. If an *adequate* satisfaction is made, it must be an *infinite* satisfaction. Why is the punishment of the damned eternal? Because *infinite* cannot be predicated of it, in any sense, but in the want of a limit to its duration.

The punishment Christ suffered, and the atonement he made, did not require unlimited duration. Why? Because the infinite dignity of his person, gave infinite value and efficacy to the satisfaction he made. The claims of the broken law are infinitely greater than the claims of the unbroken law. When Doctor G. speaks of "the righteousness of the law," and classes "the righteousness of Adam, if it had been completed," "our own righteousness, if we could produce it," and "the righteousness of Christ," as if these would be precisely the same thing, it is evident, that the penalty of the broken law is entirely out of view.

He certainly makes the claims of the broken and unbroken law, to be exactly the same. Perhaps, here lies the foundation of the greatest error in his book, and when carried out to its legitimate results, has the most direct tendency to lead to Socinianism.

"In Christ's person," says the very learned and accurate Turretin, "there is a fulness of divinity, a fulness of office, a fulness of merit, and of graces: who then can doubt, but that the satisfaction which he has made is one of infinite value and efficacy? For though Christ's human nature, which was the instrument in the obedience and sufferings, was finite, yet this does not lessen the value of the satisfaction, because it derives its perfection from the *divine person* of Christ, to which all his actions must be at-

tributed, as he is the person who obeyed and suffered."

In his second argument, p. 399, Doctor G. asks, "is not the law itself the alone and only standard of merit? Does the law command more than it commands?" &c.

Here, again, the whole argument turns on the claims of the unbroken and not the broken law, losing sight completely of its infinite requisitions.

The Doctor says, in his third argument, p. 400, "It is absolutely ridiculous to suppose that the righteousness of Christ has any other worth, merit, or value, than what it derives from the law."

Now, after all this, there will be no impropriety in saying that the righteousness of Christ derives its glorious excellency from the dignity of his person. The law did not give honour to Christ, but received honour from him, when he became its subject: "For he hath magnified the law and made it honourable." The Redeemer rendered to the law an infinitely more valuable obedience, than it ever could have received from even un sinning man.

Doctor G. asks, "Could the president of the United States pass off a dollar for more than one hundred cents?"

Here again, the old mistake—nothing of the penalty of the broken law. There is also a strange confounding of penal satisfaction, with pecuniary payment.

I shall satisfy myself with presenting to the Doctor's consideration a quotation from the celebrated Turretin, as translated by Willson, pp. 250, 251.

"Christ did not suffer eternal death as to duration, but a death of three days only, and yet he fully paid the debt of everlasting punishment, which we owed. His, which was one of finite duration, was equivalent to an everlasting death suffered by us, because of the *infinite dignity* of his person. A penal satisfac-

tion is not of the same nature with a pecuniary payment, which is only valued by the amount paid, without regard to the person who pays. Penal satisfaction is appreciated by the dignity of the person who makes it, and is increased in worth in proportion to his dignity. Money paid by a king is, indeed, of no more avail in the discharge of a debt than money paid by a slave; but the life of a king is of more value than the life of a vile slave, as the life of king David was of more worth than that of half the Israelitish army, 2 Sam. xviii. 3. In this way Christ alone is more excellent than all men together. The dignity of an *infinite* person swallows up all the infinities of punishment due to us; they sink into it and are lost." Much more might be quoted to the same purpose, but this is sufficient. Doctor G.'s views in this matter are constantly of something finite, and consequently are wholly inconclusive.

The Doctor's 4th argument, p. 400, is rather surprising. It is certainly one *sui generis*.

"If it were possible," he says, "that the dignity of Christ's person should amalgamate itself with the merit of his righteousness, that dignity never could become mine, and of consequence, is no part of his imputable righteousness. The law never required me to be a divine person: and never will condemn me, for not being a divine person."

It is not easy, precisely, to catch the doctor's meaning in these words.

1. The merit of Christ's righteousness is here presented, as an object to be conceived of apart from the dignity of his divine person. To assume such a position, and argue from it with those who deny that the merit of Christ's righteousness can either exist, or be conceived of at all, abstract from the dignity of his person, is certainly a begging the question.

2. He supposes the dignity of

Christ's person, as amalgamating with the merit of his righteousness. A case utterly insupportable, by those who differ from him, and who must necessarily grant his position before they can suppose it.

3. In such a case, he says, "that dignity never could become mine." And the reader has the reason before him, namely, "that the law never required me to be a divine person, nor will it condemn me for not being a divine person."

4. Of consequence it is no part of Christ's imputable righteousness. This may be reasoning, perhaps, and if it be, let it go for all it is worth. I must confess, however, that I can make nothing of it.

In the close of his remarks on this subject, p. 404, the Doctor "insists than God has brought the real righteousness of his law into the world, and offered it to mankind without exception." This is the same abstract righteousness again. A righteousness wrought out *per se*, and ready to be disposed of to any person willing to receive it. I wonder if this belongs to the metaphysics of Christianity. That Jesus-Christ, with all his righteousness, is freely offered to sinners, I can understand and do believe; but this righteousness of the law ready waiting (like a hundred cents to pay one dollar) for elect and reprobate alike, I cannot comprehend.

The last part of this work is, of course, *the conclusion*, p. 404, and a most extraordinary conclusion it is. It consists of forty-five pages. I cannot think of reviewing all this *book* of a conclusion. Suffice it to say, in general, that it contains much diversified matter, and many a subject. The author appears not in the least exhausted, but fights manfully to the last.

His closing war, his finishing battle, is with confessions of faith. He does not forget, however, to deal many a lusty blow upon church courts who would call a minister to account for "writing and publishing

any speculations he pleased on the philosophy of Christianity, provided he did not directly deny its essential doctrines." However, as he hopes to get rid of creeds, confessions, constitutions and liturgies, those human bibles, that have almost banished pure Bible Christians out of the churches, and as none should be called to account for writing or publishing, any error indirectly, there is, we think, little danger to be dreaded on that quarter.

But after all the outcry against confessions of faith by Dr. G. he has given us his own. I do not mean that confession which he, in common with the church of which he is a member, professes ecclesiastically to believe, but that which is, in a great measure, opposite thereto, contained in his "Mediatorial Reign." The truth is, every man must have some confession of faith, or be an absolute sceptic. Hear Dr. G. on this subject, p. 419. "I insist as strenuously as any man, that there must be an agreement in doctrine, in order to church fellowship." And yet men raise a clamour against confessions, and Dr. G. joins with them too, for "he has business on both sides of the road," and wonders, p. 437, that men, instead of believing that they are *bonds of union*, do not believe that they are *wedges of division, that their necessary effect is to organize society into factions of hostility.*

I here close my remarks on the "Mediatorial Reign," and cannot refrain from expressing my sorrow that such an arrogant performance, so hostile to the system of grace, and so subversive of the good cause of the blessed reformation, ever should have been sent forth to disturb the faith of Christians.

Pittsburgh.

JOHN BLACK.

The Retrospect: or Review of Providential Mercies; with Anecdotes of various Characters, and

an Address to Naval Officers: by Aliquis, formerly a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and now a Minister of the established Church of England. Philadelphia, published by David Hogan, 1821.

This interesting little work, intermingles the record of many unusual events, which occurred in the life of the author, with many pious remarks, and illustrations of evangelical principles. There are few such men as the writer of the *Retrospect* to be found in the Episcopal Church of England; and, indeed, considering the whole history of his life, in any portion of the visible church.

Many striking anecdotes selected from this work, without any acknowledgment of their source, have gone the rounds of our religious newspapers, and other periodical publications. It is but justice to remark, that in the *Presbyterian Magazine* we have published, from a manuscript selection furnished us, the story of the "hardened conduct and awful death of G. H.," an English mariner, without knowing that we were indebted for it originally to this publication.

The *Retrospect* ought to be better known, and read as a whole; and it certainly would be, were its merits as an entertaining and instructive volume fairly spread before the public. The style of the work is easy and natural; the facts it states are remarkable; and the reflections upon those facts judicious and savoury.

In this notice we shall simply state a few of the prominent incidents in the life of *Aliquis*. Sixteen years before the writing of the work before us, he was an abandoned young prodigal, impatient of parental restraint, "loud in blasphemy, and ever ready to burlesque and condemn the holy scriptures." To escape from the inspection of his natural guardians, to sin without control, and to obtain fancied