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THE MORALITY OF THE SABBATH.

THE word Sabbath, from the Hebrew שבת *Shabbath*, signifies rest, it having been originally applied to the day on which God ceased to speak new beings into existence. It is now applied to the first day of the week—the day on which our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. In both cases the proportion of time to which this denomination was given, was one day out of seven; in the one the *last*, and in the other the *first*, of seven days. This apportionment of time has been made by competent authority, and for the best of objects—by the authority of God, and for the purpose of promoting his glory by acts of religious homage.

The law which appoints the day and regulates its exercises, we affirm to be *moral*. By this we mean, that the sacred observance of the seventh part of time is a part of that perpetual and unalterable rule which God has revealed for the regulation of our conduct:—and by calling the Sabbath moral, we mean to distinguish it from all the regulations of the *ceremonial law*, which was binding only for a time, and was abrogated by the advent of Christ. Thus the law which enjoins the observance of the Sabbath is not ceremonial, it is not temporary, but *moral*; or, in other words, of perpetual obligation upon *all men* and in all ages. This obligation arises from the *will of God*, as revealed in the law of nature, and in his word; and as

Here we cannot forbear pausing a moment, to reflect on the fearful catastrophe of that soft, voluptuous people, wholly absorbed in the delirious dreams, and the mad pursuits of the lowest sensuality. Roused from their morning slumbers, which had succeeded the revels of the night, by the blasting fires of heaven, united with the exploding bowels of the earth, see them plunged, from their pillows, into the bosom of devouring flames;—for the soft music to which they danced, listen to the thunders which rend the firmament above their heads;—for the lascivious songs, at which they were melting away in sensual transports, hear the shrieks of despair with which they are sinking down to hell. Ah! how many thoughtless mortals, though not overwhelmed by the visible judgments of God, are, in a more silent and unobserved manner, continually descending from the midst of their unhallowed joys to the *blackness of darkness, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched!* S.

REVIEW.

A Series of Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connexion with the Modern Astronomy, by THOMAS CHALMERS, D. D. Minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow. New-York, published by Kirk & Mercein. 1817. 8vo. pp. 275. bds. price \$1 50.

THERE is nothing either novel or formidable in what is called, improperly indeed, the astronomical argument against the truth of Christianity. The more able infidels have been so sensible of this, that they have not urged it in their writings. It is frequently, however, referred to in conversation; and it is

and torpid appearance; and from a certain vapour said to exhale from its waters, which prevents or blasts all vegetation near its shores, and is fatal to the volatile tribes flying too near its surface.

understood, that some professors, in our own colleges, enforce it *ex cathedra*. It may, in such cases, have sometimes answered the purpose of deceiving novices in reasoning. Mr. Thomas Paine, the most virulent, if not the most popular writer of the deistical school, has ventured to give this objection to revealed religion a place in his *Age of Reason*. It is stated as follows :*

“ To believe that God created a plurality of worlds, at least as numerous as what we call stars, renders the Christian system of faith at once little and ridiculous, and scatters it in the mind like feathers in the air.—The two beliefs cannot be held together in the same mind ; and he who thinks that he believes both, has thought but little of either.”

The *principle* of this argument is obvious enough. A comparatively small object will not receive particular attention from one who presides over an extensive empire. All that can be said upon the subject, in the way of objection to the Christian faith, amounts to no more than this. The argument, of course, is neither new nor formidable. Its force is repelled with facility. It requires only to be understood in order to be contemned. A man of sense would scarcely venture his reputation before his friends in private life, so far as to repeat deliberately the bare assertion. It is well known that great men not only do, in fact, pay attention to some minute concerns ; but, in order to be great, they must have paid attention to many such ; and it is their imperfection and their loss, that they cannot always descend to the most minute details, without sacrificing more important interests. How absurd then, to apply the principle under consideration *against* that God, whose infinite mind is incapable of distraction by the multiplicity of objects—against Him, who, with equal ease, creates and preserves the seraph and the insect ; who controls, without embarrassment or fatigue, the destinies of mighty empires, and numbers the hairs of our heads.

* Page 47 & 40.

It by no means alters the case, or helps the argument, to dignify it with the epithet, Astronomical. The splendour of a thousand suns, and the reflected lights of their planets, may dazzle and confound the beholder; but they cannot alter the nature of truth, or transform sophistry into legitimate syllogism. If the government of this world, administered by the Lord God, does not prevent him from directing the revolutions of an atom, multiply the number of worlds as far as figures can reach, and the care of them all cannot prevent infinite goodness from extending mercy to the world on which we dwell.

As there is nothing of force in the argument, from the supposed magnitude of creation, against the truth of revealed religion, there is no credit, on the score of originality, due to those who urge it, under the pretence of their superior attainments in the science of astronomy. There is no novelty in the argument. The greatness of God's moral empire has often before been employed as an objection to the doctrine of his exhibiting special mercy to a part of his rational family. There is no controversy, in the catalogue of those disputes which have agitated the Church, more common than the one which depends upon this very absurd principle. It has been urged, again and again, by men who never pretended to any acquaintance with modern philosophy. It has been urged by the most ignorant Universalists, in favour of the system of the final salvation of all men. It has been urged by the advocates of general atonement against the doctrine of particular redemption. It has been advanced by the illiterate as well as by the learned objector to the doctrine of the decrees and providence of God, extending to the most minute concerns of every department of creation. In the principle of this very argument, the friends of the gospel of the grace of God recognize the old and steady antagonist of God's sovereignty, as a part of the faith once delivered to the saints. It is of no consequence, whether it be urged upon the hypothesis of one world, or of eighty millions of worlds. *Non majus aut minus alterat speciem.* In vain have sciolists attempted to introduce

this enemy as a stranger, discovered by astronomers, and enrobed in the lights of ten thousand stars. It is only the ancient pretence, from the magnitude of God's moral empire, against showing mercy to his peculiar people, chosen in Jesus Christ to everlasting life. Under every form it has been opposed, not to the principles of natural theology, but to the distinguishing doctrines of evangelical religion.

Infidelity itself has not ventured to reprobate all virtue among men. Every one admits the propriety of cherishing honesty, temperance, benevolence, disinterestedness, and even devotional feelings and expressions of some description. We do not remember ever to have known, that the magnitude of the creation has been urged as a reason, why men ought not to be intelligent, sober, industrious, devout, and benevolent. No, it has uniformly been urged against our faith in Jesus Christ, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"From whence," said Mr. Paine, "could arise the solitary and strange conceit, that the Almighty, who had millions of worlds, equally dependent on his protection, should quit the care of all the rest, and come to die in our world?"*

It is by intermingling truth with falsehood, that error is usually propagated among the unwary. The sentence, which we have quoted, affords a good specimen of this practice, marked indeed with the characteristic profanity and vulgarity of its author. Christians never affirmed, or even *conceited*, that the Almighty "left the care" of any, or all the rest, of his creatures, when he came to this world for the redemption of his sons and daughters. On the contrary, they believe and affirm, that, at the very moment, in which Jesus Christ expired on the cross, his shoulders upheld the fabric of the universe: and yet, it is upon the insinuation of such desertion,

* First part, Age of Reason, page 46.

'Whence,' said another writer, professing Christianity, with the same reason, but more courtesy, 'whence the idea, that Jesus Christ, who had millions of others, equally dependent on his protection, should come and die for the elect?' Verily, Mr. Paine, with all his acuteness, did not invent this argument. Deists are not the only antagonists of the Christian doctrines.

as ignoble as it is false, that the whole force of the infidel objection depends. It is not the doctrine of Christ, therefore, but the principle, which makes it necessary, on the part of God, to *quit the care* of one part of his works before he can show mercy to another, that is disrespectful to his infinite attributes, both natural and moral. The fact, nevertheless, of Christ's advent into this world, which Mr. Paine calls, in his own peculiar style, *a solitary and strange conceit*, is confessed by all Christians to be a solitary and wonderful instance of divine condescension. *Without controversy GREAT IS THE MYSTERY of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. This is the Lord's doing; it is MARVELLOUS in our eyes.** This glorious truth is the head of the corner. Take it away, and nothing of Christianity remains, worthy of being defended.

Let the argument, however, be tested by a fair application of the principle which it involves, to cases which come within the sphere of common observation, and then its fallacy will appear to every one. If the vast extent of God's dominions precludes him from making a particular display of the riches of his goodness in any one part of his empire, then the husbandman is prevented, by the largeness of his farm, from building his house and cultivating his garden upon any part of his property: then the ruler of a civilized commonwealth is, by the greatness of the number of his subjects, absolutely excluded from showing kindness to any person whatsoever, and from cherishing habits of particular friendship with any one individual in the community. Then, too, if no sovereignty is to be exercised in the distribution of privileges, the several classes of creation have a right to complain of the hand that formed them, saying, *Why hast thou made me thus?* Then, not only should man himself present his accusations for having been made lower than the angels, but the inferior creation should impeach the justice of him who put them in subjection.

Let it not be understood, that we have any controversy with men of a liberal and scientific character, about the utility of

* 1 Tim. iii. 16. Ps. cxviii. 23.

literature and philosophy. The lights of science are too valuable to be extinguished—too delightful to be defamed—too splendid not to be admired. They are favourable to every improvement in civilized society, while they direct individuals to many sources of high enjoyment ; and, as truth is uniformly consistent, it is not possible that the progress of knowledge, in any department, should, of itself, become injurious to the hope of the children of Israel. He is not a child of light that would deprecate a spirit of inquiry among his cotemporaries ; that would offer restraints to liberal discussion in others ; or receive, as an article of his own faith, any idea which is confessedly inconsistent with some other truth demonstrated. It is a prejudice, as injurious to the true interests of religion in the world, as it is in itself contemptible, that represents sound philosophy as hostile to piety, or that would proscribe from the pulpit all allusion to the arts and sciences. It is not necessary for Christian Pastors to be superficial, in order to be intelligible, or to be unphilosophical, in order to be evangelical. Enough has already been done, through timidity, through indolence, and ignorance, to banish from the public ministrations, boldness of speech, extent of research, profoundness of thought, together with didactic and polemic theology. “ It were well,” says Dr. Chalmers, in his preface, referring to those who take alarm at the semblance of philosophy, “ it were well for our cause, that they would suffer theology to take that wide range of argument and of illustration which belongs to her.”

The volume which now lies before us, and which suggested these remarks, contains seven sermons, “ chiefly delivered on the occasion of a week-day sermon that is preached in rotation by the ministers of Glasgow.” The New-York edition is executed in the style of the Glasgow copy, and printed from it, page for page. Independently of the partiality in favour of popular British publications, which prevails in this country, these discourses deserve to be well received ; and they have already obtained a good share of public estimation.* They

* We have seen already the fifth edition from Great Britain, and a second American edition is published

require only to be read, in order to be admired ; for they are “ as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument.”*

The object of the work is to refute the argument which the modern astronomy is supposed to furnish against the Christian system. “ This argument,” says Dr. Chalmers, “ involves in it an assertion and an inference. The *assertion* is, that Christianity is a religion which professes to be designed for the single benefit of our world ; and the *inference* is, that God cannot be author of this religion, for, he would not lavish on so insignificant a field such peculiar and such distinguishing attentions as are ascribed to him in the Old and New Testament.”† The Preacher combats both the *assertion* and the *inference*, and he combats them successfully ; generally, too, with sound reasoning, and always with eloquence. He is far from calling in question the discoveries of astronomers. He admits, moreover, the hypothesis of countless worlds. He declares his own belief, that all the planets belonging to the solar system are inhabited by rational creatures. He thinks too, that all the fixed stars are the centres of so many distinct solar systems, every planet of which is peopled with moral agents. He even suggests, that each of these suns, having a progressive motion, travels, with all his tributaries, around some distant centre, from which there emanates an influence to keep them all in subordination. Nay, in referring to the *Nebulæ*, which the telescope has revealed to the human eye, he indulges a conjecture, that these higher and more magnificent systems are arranged into clusters, each forming a part of a more complicated and still more extensive system of peopled worlds. Indeed, no astronomer, not even those, who, leaving their demonstrations, indulge in hypothesis, can complain of Dr. Chalmers’s liberality in calculating the dimensions of the universe.

“ And after all,” he exclaims, “ though it be a mighty and difficult conception, yet who can question it ? What is seen may be nothing to what is unseen ; for what is seen is limited by the range of our

* The text of the last discourse in the series. † Page 6.

instruments. What is unseen has no limit ; and, though all which the eye of man can take in, or his fancy can grasp at, were swept away, there might still remain as ample a field, over which the Divinity may expatiate, and which he may have peopled with innumerable worlds. If the whole visible creation were to disappear, it would leave a solitude behind it—but to the Infinite Mind, that can take in the whole system of nature, this solitude would be nothing ; a small unoccupied point in that immensity which surrounds it, and which he may have filled with the wonders of his omnipotence. Though this earth were to be burned up, though the trumpet of its dissolution were sounded, though yon sky were to pass away as a scroll, and every visible glory, which the finger of the Divinity has inscribed on it, were to be put out for ever—an event, so awful to us, and to every world in our vicinity, by which so many suns would be extinguished, and so many varied scenes of life and of population would rush into forgetfulness—what is it in the high scale of the Almighty's workmanship ? A mere shred, which, though scattered into nothing, would leave the universe of God one entire scene of greatness and of majesty. Though this earth, and these heavens, were to disappear, there are other worlds, which roll afar ; the light of other suns shines upon them ; and the sky which mantles them, is garnished with other stars. Is it presumption to say, that the moral world extends to these distant and unknown regions ? that they are occupied with people ? that the charities of home and of neighbourhood flourish there ? that the praises of God are there lifted up, and his goodness rejoiced in ? that piety has its temples and its offerings ? and the richness of the divine attributes is there felt and admired by intelligent worshippers ?” pp. 48—50.

Having, in the *first* discourse, presented us with a sketch of the modern astronomy, so far as it has any connexion with his subject, he shows, in the *second*, that the *assertion* which he combats, is made without sufficient warrant. He argues, that it is a bare presumption from human ignorance, and utterly unworthy of the followers of Bacon and Newton, as votaries of the inductive philosophy.

“ It is not I who am pitching my adventurous flight to the secret things, which belong to God, away from the things that are revealed, and which belong to me and to my children. It is the

champion of that very infidelity which I am now combating. It is he who props his unchristian argument, by presumptions fetched out of those untravelled obscurities, which lie on the other side of a barrier that I pronounce to be impassable. It is he who transgresses the limits which Newton forbore to enter; because, with a justness which reigns throughout all his inquiries, he saw the limit of his own understanding, nor would he venture himself beyond it. It is he who has borrowed of this wondrous man, a few dazzling conceptions, which have only served to bewilder him—while, an utter stranger to the spirit of this philosophy, he has carried a daring and an ignorant speculation far beyond the boundary of its prescribed and allowable enterprises. It is he who has mustered against the truths of the Gospel, resting, as it does, on evidence within the reach of his faculties, an objection, for the truth of which he has no evidence whatever. It is he who puts away from him a doctrine for which he has the substantial and the familiar proof of human testimony; and substitutes in its place a doctrine, for which he can get no other support than from a reverie of his own imagination. It is he who turns aside from all that safe and certain argument, that is supplied by the history of this world, of which he knows something; and who loses himself in the work of theorizing after other worlds, of the moral and theological history of which he positively knows nothing. Upon him, and not upon us, lies the folly of launching his impetuous way beyond the province of observation—of setting his fancy afloat among the unknown of distant and mysterious regions—and, by an act of daring, as impious as it is unphilosophical, of trying to unwrap that shroud, which, till drawn aside by the hand of a messenger from heaven, will ever veil, from human eye, the purposes of the eternal.” pp. 82, 83.

In the *third* discourse, the Author proposes to show, that, were the *assertion* true, that Christianity is a religion which professes to be designed for the single benefit of our world, the reasoning constructed upon it is false: and he pursues, with great ability, the same subject in the three following sermons. The *seventh*, and last discourse in the volume, is not immediately connected with his argument, but is designed to show, that the illusion of seriousness and of sentiment, which the circumstances under which Christianity is publicly taught, usually

“ throw around the character of man,” is essentially different from religion itself.

“ Religion has its accompaniments ; and in these there may be something to soothe, and to fascinate, even in the absence of the appropriate influences of religion. The deep and tender impression of a family bereavement, is not religion. The love of established decencies is not religion. The charm of all that sentimentalism, which is associated with many of its solemn and affecting services, is not religion. They may form the distinct folds of its accustomed drapery ; but they do not, any, or all of them put together, make up the substance of the thing itself.” p. 122.

“ A man may have a taste for eloquence, and eloquence the most touching or sublime may lift her pleading voice on the side of religion. A man may love to have his understanding stimulated by the ingenuities, or the resistless urgencies of an argument.—A man may have his attention riveted and regaled by that power of imitative description which brings all the recollections of his own experience before him.—Now, in all these cases, I see other principles brought into action, and which may be in a state of most lively and vigorous movement, and be yet in a state of entire separation from the principle of religion.” pp. 224, 225.

We would gladly make more quotations from this interesting volume : but we have given enough as a specimen ; and we recommend the work itself to general perusal. The Author will recommend himself to public attention in this, as well as his native country, as a man of sense, and of fancy, a man of learning, and of piety. His sermons abound in fine description, and contain a great deal of, what is called in the language of the schools, *humanity*. The theology is throughout evangelical, and almost always correctly expressed. We blame Dr. Chalmers, nevertheless, on several accounts ; principally, indeed, for that, which we are apprehensive will give him the greatest popularity—belabouring his style too much throughout, and sometimes almost into unintelligibility. He abounds in masculine conceptions ; he has great command of words ; and they are generally harmoniously arranged ; but he incurs, in a very high degree, what his own distinguished countrymen,

the Critics of the Scottish capital, justly call "the great reproach of our modern literature."^{*}

We select, in illustration of this charge, a small portion of a sentence from page 130. For the entire sentence we cannot spare room. It is spread over two octavo pages, and completely covers them with one idea—there are limits to human knowledge. The part we quote, is long enough for analysis.

"—the whole face, both of nature and of society, presents him with questions which he cannot unriddle, and tells him how beneath the surface of all that the eye can rest upon, there lies the profoundness of a most unsearchable latency—"

In this bit of a sentence of two pages, the Author *personifies* nature and society at once. To this we have no objection. It is still the simple and legitimate metaphor. The person, painted before us, has, of course, a face, *a whole face*, as he ought to have. But, this very face is, also, personified; and so becomes, in the picture, itself a whole man. This is a complex metaphor, and the picture is that of a monster. The new person then makes *presents*; *for he presents us with questions*; and he moreover speaks, for he *tells us of the surface of all that the eye can rest upon*; he tells us even *what* is beneath this surface, and *how* it is situated—*there lies*, not sits or stands, what? Why the very essence of profundity, the most abstract quality imaginable, personified in a recumbent picture, "there lies the profoundness." The profoundness of what? the profoundness of latency: but what kind of latency is that of which the profoundness is seen lying down to rest. We are told it is unsearchable, yea, "the most unsearchable" of all latencies. Let it not be forgotten, that we are introduced into this region of unintelligibilities, beneath the surface of all that the eye can rest upon, by "the whole face of nature and society."

* "He (Lord Byron) never dilutes his strong conceptions and magnificent imaginations with a flood of oppressive verbosity. In his nervous and manly lines, we find no elaborate amplification of common sentiments—no ostentatious polishing of pretty expressions—and we would fain hope he may go far, by his example, to redeem the great reproach of our modern literature—its intolerable prolixity and redundancy." *Edin. Review*. vol. 27. p. 278.

A Preacher, of Dr. Chalmers's manly sense, ought not, when treating from the pulpit a question agitated by philosophers, to permit himself to be seduced, by the false, but too prevalent, taste for splendid declamation, so far from the exercise of his own vigorous intellect, as to spend his time, in arranging upon paper, sentences which contain such incongruities. Perhaps to the same unhappy cause, the prevalence of popular taste for declamation, should be ascribed another fault—the expulsion from his sermons of those Scriptural proofs and illustrations which he has inserted in the form of an appendix. In that situation they are of little use. Few will ever read them ; and fewer still will take the trouble of comparing them with the parts of the argument, in the body of the work, to which they refer. We are not, as yet, on this side the Atlantic, arrived at so high a degree of fastidiousness, in matters of literary taste, as to exclude our Bible from the number of our classics, or to esteem a sermon less for its containing some quotations from that book in proof of the doctrine, and even for ornament to pulpit eloquence. We lament that any of the pious sons of good old Presbyterian Scotland should be found, and that too in her own favourite Glasgow, who should deem it degrading to his style of composition to have it interwoven with the word of God, or who should be satisfied with placing his quotations from the Bible behind his own work, in a place where their principal utility is the profit they yield to the setters of types and the venders of books.

We have already declared our approbation, in general terms, of Dr. Chalmers's theological doctrines. They are decidedly evangelical, so far as they are decidedly expressed : but there is one idea, repeatedly suggested, which we cannot in justice, as Guardians of the Christian Faith, permit to pass without remark. A suggestion from so popular a writer as Dr. Chalmers, merits attention. We refer to the idea, that the atonement, made in the obedience and death of Christ, expiates the sins of others than fallen Adam and his descendants. This idea is not *asserted* ; but we censure even the *suggestion*, as useless certainly, and perhaps of pernicious tendency.

“ From which we *indistinctly* guess at the fact, that the redemption itself may stretch *beyond the limits* of the world we occupy.— It must be admitted that the Bible does not speak clearly or decisively as to the proper effect of redemption being extended to *other worlds*.—We will not say how far some of these passages extend the proper effect of that redemption which is by Jesus Christ to *other quarters* of the universe—they give us a distant glimpse of *something more extended*—It does not tell us whether the fountain opened in the house of Judah, for sin and for uncleanness, *send forth its healing streams to other worlds* than our own. It does not tell us *the extent* of the atonement.”* pp. 135, 144, 148, 149.

We do not know whether, in writing these words, the Doctor had in view the inquiry of Thomas Paine or not: but, we are certain, that there is no foundation in the Scriptures for either the interrogatories of the infidel or the *guesses* of his antagonist. “ Are we to suppose,” said the author of the *Age of Reason*, “ that every world in the boundless creation had an Eve, an apple, a serpent, and a Redeemer? In this case the person who is irreverently called the Son of God, and sometimes God himself, would have nothing else to do than to travel from world to world, in an endless succession of death, with scarce a momentary interval of life.” We are far from considering Dr. Chalmers’ suggestion, of extending to rebels in other worlds the expiation for sin made on earth, to be so good an answer, to the scoffing suggestion of Mr. Paine, as that which was given long before by Mr. Andrew Fuller—“ *Let creation be as extensive as it may, and the number of worlds be multiplied to the utmost boundary to which imagination can reach, there is no proof that any of them except men and angels have apostatized from God.*”* We have, moreover, proof positive, that Jesus Christ took not upon him the nature of angels; but was made of the seed of Abraham. The Scriptures exclude *guessing*; for, although the ransomed of the Lord be a multitude which no man can number, we know they are only the Church of God which he has purchased with his own blood.

* Gospel its own Witness. p. 205

The redemption of Christ is indeed the chief of the ways of God : and the salutary consequences of that glorious work extending through eternity, redound to the honour of its Author, and to the good of all his obedient subjects. The extent of the atonement is defined by that covenant of which the death of Christ was the condition ; but its beatific effects pervade all the ranks of intelligent beings, wheresoever they continue, throughout the universe, in the friendship and favour of Jehovah. The redemption of Israel, his peculiar people, procures a merciful dispensation in this world, by which even the reprobate sinner experiences several advantages of a temporary kind ; and the knowledge of this mighty work fills with joy and gladness the inhabitants of all the celestial abodes. This consideration, if it do not, in time, silence the reasonings of heretics, and the scoffings of avowed unbelievers, is sufficient to satisfy the hearts of those who sincerely search for truth ; to settle them in the faith of that sacred revelation which God has been pleased to grant us in the inspired oracles ; and to render them happy throughout eternity.

These Scriptures assures us that other intelligent beings, than those who dwell on earth, have a knowledge of the purpose of redemption, and of the execution of the high decree. The angels contemplate this world as the peculiar theatre upon which the riches of divine grace are exhibited to view. In the blessed effects of the exhibition, there is inconceivable joy among their elevated ranks—and the future rewards and punishments, which shall be publicly dispensed on the day of judgment, will afford, throughout every department of creation, however extensive its dimensions, sufficient discoveries of the perfect moral excellency, as well as of the grandeur, of the natural attributes of the Governor of all worlds.

We conclude this Review with a remark, to which philosophical sceptics should attend. The magnitude of creation, compared with the worth of any individual, is no new idea to the saints. Every believer has felt himself as nothing, has viewed this world as nothing, before God. By multiplying indefinitely, the number of worlds, philosophy only gives

greater intensity to that conviction of unworthiness, with which every Christian on earth is previously familiar. We even go further, in our convictions of personal insignificancy, than the astronomical argument itself would carry us. We add to the idea of our natural littleness, the idea of our moral worthlessness. And yet, in the work of redemption, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is worthy of infinite wisdom, amidst the immensity of His dominions, to select some part of the universe for a perfect display of the attributes of justice and of mercy in harmony; and it were fit that part should be selected, for this purpose, in which His power and His goodness were most vehemently opposed. This has been the case. On this earth rebel angels, joined with rebel men, united their exertions to oppose the Deity; and here, the Son of God triumphed over principalities and powers, making a show of them openly. Let the Professor of Astronomy, under the fatuity of his unbelief, demonstrate to his own satisfaction, the worthlessness of this world, and of every part of it. Let him, in the light of the thousand suns which blaze through the universe, prove, to his pupils, the insignificancy of country and kindred, of college, of students, professor, salary, reputation, science, and all; but still it is not unreasonable to believe, that He, who clothes the lilies of the field, should have mercy upon immortal souls—should glorify himself in the redemption of men, and in their introduction, in the bloom of perpetual health and beauty in body and spirit, into the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world.