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No. II.

ARTICLE I.—1. *A Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia, to the Presbyteries and Churches under their care; dated Lancaster, Sept. 20, 1816.* Printed in the Freeman's Journal, and other papers.

2.—*A Vindication of the late Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia, &c.* Philadelphia, Oct. 1816. 12mo.

3.—*Extracts from the minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, for May, 1817.* Printed by T. & W. Bradford. 8vo.

IT was our design never to devote a page to the subject of the Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia; but circumstances have produced a change in our purposes. A short time since a friend presented to us a number of "The Register," printed in Knoxville in Tennessee, which contains an "extract of a letter from a friend in Philadelphia to a friend in Tennessee, dated May 27th, 1817," and which seems calculated to misinform the friends of orthodoxy in the west, while it misrepresents both the Synod and the General Assembly. Who the writer of this letter is we know not, but he would evidently be thought to be a minister of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, from the assertion, that "our Presbytery" contains *twenty four* members, and that "there were but three of US at that meeting." We cannot think, nevertheless, that this letter came from any minister of the Synod, because it says "there were some things in the Synod's book," meaning a resolution, "of

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ARTICLE IV.—*A Historical Sketch of Opinions on the Atonement; interspersed with Biographical Notices of the Leading Doctors, and Outlines of the Sections of the Church, from the Incarnation of Christ, to the present time; with Translations from Francis Turretin, on the Atonement.* By the Rev. James R. Willson, A. M. Philadelphia: published by E. Earle. 1817. pp. 351. 8vo.

MR. WILLSON is a thorough, consistent and fearless Calvinist. His doctrinal views correspond with our own, and of course we think his writings valuable. We may be deemed partial in reviewing him, but we shall endeavour to be just; while we make it our principal business to give an outline of his history of the doctrine of the atonement.

That Christ Jesus entered into covenant, in the counsels of eternity, to save all that were chosen in him into eternal life; that in the fulness of time he became man and fulfilled his mediatorial engagements, by rendering a perfect active obedience to the precepts of the moral law, and by suffering the penalty incurred by the sins of his people, and of their sins alone, so that it is a matter of debt to Christ, but of grace to the elect, that they should all be effectually called, justified, sanctified, and glorified, is the doctrine of a plenary, definite, personal atonement, which Mr. W. thinks was inculcated by the apostles, and prevailed in the first and purest age of evangelical sentiment. The Scribes and Pharisees he considers as having been the first opposers of this doctrine of life, for they taught men to expect acceptance with God on condition of ritual observances, regard to traditions, and mere morality.

Among the Christian Fathers there seems to have been no controversy about either the nature or the extent of the atonement, and therefore they did little more than occasionally quote the Bible on the subject, until Arius arose, who denied the essential divinity of the Son of God; and was condemned as a heretic, by the council of Nice in the year of Christ 325. Arianism, however, became the religion of the imperial court, and

prepared the way for the introduction of "the man of sin," and "the dark ages" of his reign. In place of the atonement of Christ, the Romish church exalted her unbloody sacrifices, penances, absolutions from priests, the superabundance of merit in the saints, and various institutions of human invention. Religion with the true doctrine of Christ's satisfaction to divine justice, fled away into the vallies of the Alps, and continued there, until God sent them, hand in hand, to enlighten Martin Luther, and God's heroes of the Reformation from popery. They revived the doctrine that "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mark x. 45.

Among the Protestants, John Arminius, who was born in Holland, A. D. 1560, was the first who extensively propagated the tenet of an indefinite, universal atonement. That Jesus died for every child of Adam, so as to render satisfaction for the sins of Judas, as much as for Peter, was a doctrine of Arminius and his followers, condemned in the Synod of Dort, in 1616. The British divines who were present, expressed the sentiments of the majority of that body, when they stated, that "All those for whom Jesus died shall experience the efficacy of his death, for the mortification of sin; and they 'shall become kings and priests unto God.'" From Arminius all who bear his name in the Protestant churches, have derived their doctrine of universal atonement or redemption, which they couple with that of salvation on condition of personal repentance and perseverance. From the time of Arminius to the present day, the greater part of professing Christians not in the papal connexion, have been denominated either Calvinists or Arminians, according as they have favoured the doctrines of the Rev. John Calvin, or of the Rev. John Arminius, concerning election, the extent of the atonement, human depravity, human ability, and the perseverance of saints. As distinct ecclesiastical denominations, however, neither party has existed, but in almost every organized section of the Christian

church, both Calvinists and Arminians have been found.

In the Protestant church of France, Piscator, Cameron and Amyraut were the principal instruments of turning men from the truth. Mr. Willson conceives that the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, which exterminated that church, was a divine judgment for the shameful manner in which she temporized in her great councils, about the introduction of pernicious errors. The Arminian doctrine of atonement was probably originated by a desire to reconcile Socinianism and Calvinism, for before Arminius modified the protestant creed upon this subject, he had probably become conversant with the sentiments of Lælius and Faustus Socinus, who while they opposed popery in Tuscany and Switzerland, opposed also the divinity of the Son of God, and denied every species of atonement. "While error was spreading in Holland, by Arminius and his disciples; in France, from the Saumur; and heresy from Racow, in Poland, the school of Geneva for a great many years preserved its attachment to the system of the reformation, without the least deviation." p. 63. The Reformed Church of Holland is to this day orthodox in her professions; the Reformed Church of France was dispersed, and at present the Romish religion prevails there, with the exception of a few Protestant Episcopal English churches; and in Germany, and indeed on the continent of Europe generally, either Socinianism or Arianism, is the predominant system among the public teachers of the order of Protestants. A respectable German minister of the city of New York assured the conductor of this Review, that he was personally acquainted with more than one hundred German Protestant ministers, and among them all four only could be found, who did not wholly deny the divinity of Christ and every kind of satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of men.

From the continent, Mr. W. passes in his historical researches, to England and thence to Scotland. He gives us the result of his investigations in relation to the first reformers in these countries, the Established Epis-

copal church, the Presbyterians, the Independents, the Westleyan Methodists, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Swedenburghians, and the different species of Scotch Seceders and Covenanters.

From Scotland Mr. W. passes to America, and devotes more than ninety pages to the historical sketch of opinions and parties in this western world. As might have been expected, he is more minute in his details concerning his native land, than any other. The English Puritans who first settled New England were Calvinists, who believed and taught the doctrines of the Westminster and Savoy Confessions of Faith. Our author makes us particularly acquainted with the views of Richard, Increase, and Cotton Mather, of John Harvard, Benjamin Coleman and others, who were zealous opposers of Arminianism. It found its way, however, into Yale College, even in the time of Coleman, greatly to his sorrow. In Virginia, Arminianism was planted simultaneously with the established Episcopal clergy of the colony; and Maryland received the Romish religion from George Calvert, Baron of Baltimore; while Pennsylvania was originally imbued with Quakerism, by the celebrated William Penn. The Reformed Dutch Church in New York and New Jersey was a branch of the Reformed Church in Holland, and retained the orthodox confession of the reformation. The Presbyterian churches in the United States were at first formed through the influence of emigrants from the different Presbyterian churches in England, Scotland and Ireland: and they too adopted the orthodox creed of their progenitors, in the old world.

To presume that there were, from the organization of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, no Arminian teachers in them, would be presuming too much; but it is certain, that the Westminster Confession was generally acknowledged by these denominations in the United States, to be a correct exhibition of scriptural doctrine, until the appearance of the "New Lights" in the days of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, the Rev. George Whitefield. When he first

preached in this country he maintained some few erroneous tenets, which he subsequently retracted and refuted, as will be evident to any candid reader of his works. He was the honoured instrument of calling multitudes of sinners into the faith and fellowship of the Son of God.

Through his instrumentality, many who were fast asleep in the soundness of their faith, were aroused to activity. The pious generally hailed him as the great apostle of the latter days. Many opposed him from very different motives. Dr. Chauncey of Boston, the inventor of a protestant purgatory for the Universalists of his order, in which a few thousand years of torment are to fit them for heaven, was called into the streets of that town very early on a certain morning by the ringing of bells: he found the multitude pressing along as men in haste to extinguish a fire, and could not divine the cause of their eagerness, until in Cornhill he met Mr. Whitefield in his robes. "Good morning, Dr. Chauncey," said the mighty orator.

"What! are you here, Mr. Whitefield, making all this noise?" said Dr. Chauncey, with more unceremonious roughness than he was accustomed to use; "I'm sorry to see you, Sir!"

Whitefield bowed very graciously and replied, as he shot by him, "Ah! good Doctor, and so is the Devil."

Others opposed Whitefield because they thought his preaching too exclusively addressed to the feelings of his auditors. "They admitted, that Mr. Whitefield might be, and no doubt was, instrumental in the conversion of numerous sinners; that he was pious and honest in his intentions; but they feared that the storm of passion which was raised, would lay waste the order of the church, and in the end, produce more evil than good." p. 137. Of the revival which followed his ministry, Mr. Willson judiciously observes, that through the instrumentality of Satan and the corruptions of the human heart, it was the means of introducing into the Presbyterian church evils of which it has never yet been able to purge itself; even while God made it

prove the means of salvation to many sinners. This is nothing unusual; for when Satan sees any of the servants of God uncommonly industrious in sowing the good seed of the kingdom, it stirs him up to new zeal in sowing tares.

It was in the time of Mr. Whitefield that a new sect began to arise in New England, which has since borne the name of Dr. Samuel Hopkins, who with Doctors Bellamy, West, Spring and Emmons may be considered as having founded it. They have ingeniously attempted to blend Calvinism and Arminianism. On the subject of atonement the Hopkinsians more nearly agree with the Arminians than with any other denomination; for both say it is indefinite, and universal in its own nature, and in the extent of its design. The Arminians say that it brings all mankind into a salvable state; and the Hopkinsians that it opens a door for the salvation of all mankind; which amounts to the same thing: but after the full atonement is made for all, the former suspend the salvation of sinners upon the foreseen, self determination of some to accept of proffered grace; and the latter upon the sovereign pleasure of God to apply the atonement not to a covenant people for whom it was made, but to the objects of a particular election. That Christ was legally punished at all, is denied by the Hopkinsians; who deem the sufferings of the Son of God a sovereign display of the divine hatred against sin, made in a glorious, innocent, guiltless, divine individual: in consequence of which God can be discovered to be the enemy of sin, even while he passes by the transgressions of the elect, without ever punishing them in any one. At present this is the prevailing doctrine among all denominations in New England, who believe in any atonement by Jesus Christ, which the Socinians do not. It is but justice, however, to say, that a great portion of the clergymen who receive this Hopkinsian doctrine of atonement, reject the other peculiarities of the system, and either agree with the pious Arminians, or the Calvinists, in very many other tenets. We conceive, nevertheless, that while a man

may be pious, and do much good by teaching the truth so far as he holds it, yet no man can be a *consistent Calvinist* and deny a definite, plenary, legal satisfaction to divine justice for all the sins of those who shall be received to heaven. It is the inconsistency of their system, who in many respects are sound in the faith, that has facilitated the introduction of Arianism, Socinianism, and Deism, into Massachusetts, and some other places in our country. We recollect to have heard the Rev. Joseph S. Buckminster of Battle Street church in Boston, say, at a time when his opinions appeared to be in a state of fluctuation, "that to be consistent he must either be a thorough Calvinist of the old school, or else renounce Calvinism altogether." Many men of extensive erudition like himself have felt the force of this sentiment, and it needs not the spirit of prophecy to foretel, that nothing short of Calvinistic preaching will ever recover the thinking men of Boston from Socinianism. The Hopkinsian Calvinism as it is called, may gain some proselytes, on account of some evangelical doctrines that are mingled with the heterogeneous mass, but the system of the ancient fathers of New England must be revived there, or the present lamented heresy must continue to prevail; unless God should adopt some method of working, novel in the history of his gracious providence, for the revival of his work.

Could the clergy of Connecticut be corrected in their views of the atonement, they would then be thorough Calvinists at once; for with the exception of a few admirers of Dr. Emmons, they are now Calvinists, so far as it is possible they should be, while they consider the Son of God as having obeyed and died for those who shall experience the justice of God in their own personal sufferings in hell.

Mr. Willson is a Covenanter; and it is very natural for him to suppose, that the introduction of the versification of the Psalms by Dr. Watts into the eastern churches, "was setting open the floodgates of error." "With the Psalms of Watts, his other writings were introduced into New England. Men who had been ac-

customed to sing only divinely inspired songs, when they began to sing those of Watts, would naturally attach something like the notion of inspiration to his character, as thousands have since done, who assert that he was as much inspired as David. Hence they would be ready to embrace every opinion which they found in his writings." This is imagination and not history; and we must imagine too, that instead of David, Mr. W. should have written Rouse, or Tate and Brady, or Sternhold and Hopkins, or Dwight: for surely no Protestant of common sense would say Watts was as much inspired as David. We have heard of some Covenanters who were reputed to hold that David was the author of Rouse's poetical, (or shall we say prosaic?) paraphrase; but really Mr. Willson's anecdote is more incredible than this. The writings of Dr. Watts have not been so generally read as our author supposes; and yet we cannot deny that Dr. Watts' treatise on the pre-existence of the human soul of our Saviour has wrought much mischief. It has enabled the Socinians to claim that good man as one of their antitrinitarian party. It was the book which first turned the head of the Rev. John Sherman of Mansfield in Connecticut; for we well remember to have seen it in his hand, and to have heard him comment upon it, when he first published his departure from the faith, to the Clerical Association of which he was a member, and attempted to convince them that Dr. Watts is correct in his Sabelian notions. We wish the pernicious consequences of that treatise had terminated here, but a member of congress assured us, that in January of the present year, the Rev. Mr. Allison, chaplain to congress, preached the doctrine that Christ's human soul was created before his body, before any other creature, to the legislature of the nation, and referred to Dr. Watts as the father of the doctrine. Now most men know, that the members of congress in general study theology very little; and yet sometimes talk much about it among their religious constituents; and it is to be feared many will remember to carry home and circulate this heresy,

while they forget every thing else which Mr. Allison may have preached during the whole session. He told a member of congress that he had entertained this notion for twenty years. It is to be regretted that he did not publish it before, that had he been then elected chaplain, the refutation of his distinguishing error might have gone with him to Washington. If our life is spared, we will review this treatise of Dr. Watts, at some convenient time; and therefore now resume the thread of Mr. Willson's history.

The arrival of Dr. Joseph Priestley in this country he considers a matter of considerable interest.

“ When he arrived in Philadelphia, the celebrity which he had acquired as a philosopher, chiefly as a chemist, procured him much attention, from many distinguished men; but the Presbyterian clergy did not recognize him as a minister of Christ Jesus; nor indeed did those of any of the Christian societies in the city. They were aware of his heretical opinions, and were resolved to shew him no countenance. Though he was introduced to many of the clergy, yet none of them invited him into their pulpits. In the Philadelphia Academy there is a room appropriated to divine worship on the sabbath, for any denomination of Christians, who have no place of their own. In this Dr. Priestley was permitted to deliver his lectures, and was heard by crowded audiences, whom curiosity to hear a man of such celebrity drew together. These opinions which he knew were obnoxious, were kept out of view till the last lecture which he delivered, in which he unfolded, without disguise, his Socinian heresies. Some of the clergy of the city occasionally heard these lectures.

“ He formed an acquaintance with Dr. Ewing, and on one sabbath went with him to his church in Market street. The doctor introduced Priestley into his pew, without giving him an invitation into his pulpit, as was his custom, with those gentlemen whom he recognized as brethren in the ministry. The preachers too attacked, with great faithfulness, the heresies which Priestley was endeavouring to disseminate. He and his Socinian brethren were greatly offended with these insults, as they called them, and with the opposition made to his creed. They represented him as a persecuted apostle. Little did they consider that he was endeavouring to destroy every thing, which the great body of Christians, from the beginning of the world, had held most sacred,—that he was attempting to pluck the crown from the head of the Messiah, whom they adored,

and to wrest from them all those hopes of salvation, which were founded upon his atoning sacrifice. Though much respect was shewn to the philosophical foreigner as a man of science, in both New-York and Philadelphia, yet as his heresies rendered his very name unsavory to nearly all Christians, his situation was far from being comfortable. He indeed professed no anxiety to disseminate his principles, but as we learn from his life, and from some of his letters published since his death, it was the governing principle of all his actions, after he came to America. Among the common people he made little progress, but they were not the persons whom he was chiefly solicitous to gain over in the first instance. His object was the great. Among the distinguished persons with whom he became intimate was Mr. John Adams, at that time vice-president of the United States; who was his constant hearer while in Philadelphia,* and who it is said received the sacrament at his hands. Mr. Adams was no doubt honest in his preference of Dr. Priestley's ministry, on account of the creed which he held. Long before that period he was called an Arminian. Though we have no decisive testimony that Mr. Adams became a convert to the Socinian creed, yet from the honesty of his character, and the preference which he gave to Priestley's ministry, hardly a shadow of doubt exists that he did. In 1796, the first volume of Priestley's Evidences of revealed religion was published, and dedicated to the vice-president. To proselyte a president was in his view almost to convert a nation. In 1797, Mr. Adams was inaugurated president of the United States; and thus there is good reason to believe that the creed of Socinus was elevated to the highest official rank in the republic."

"Soon after Mr. Adams's elevation to the presidential chair, there was a commissioner to be appointed to Great Britain for the settlement of some important concerns. Before that time Thomas Cooper, Esq., Dr. Priestley's friend, had arrived from Europe. Mr. Cooper was his theological disciple and of the same political creed. Priestley wrote to President Adams, a letter, recommending Cooper as a fit person to be appointed on the embassy to England. The president with some temper, rejected the proposition, declaring that there were Americans capable of filling such stations. Dr. Priestley now perceived that Mr. Adams did not suit his purpose; that Pennsylvania was a powerful state, whose weight thrown into an opposite scale, would probably change the administration; and that he could perhaps produce more effect upon a person of another

* Priestley's Life, Vol. II. p. 760.

character, at the head of the government. He took his measures accordingly. A newspaper was established at Northumberland, under the patronage of Dr. Priestley and the friend on whose behalf he had made application. Many circumstances relative to this establishment and its editor were not very honourable to the doctor and his friend. In this paper Dr. Priestley published several addresses to the people of Northumberland,* and in relation to the political state of the country. These addresses and numerous other articles from his pen, and that of Mr. Cooper, were published, not only in Northumberland, but circulated, by other papers, over the whole state, and produced very great effect on the election of an opposition governor in Pennsylvania; by which the whole weight of Pennsylvania was thrown into the scale in favour of Mr. Jefferson. He supplanted Mr. Adams. Though there were various other causes operating to produce this great political change, yet without the aid of Dr. Priestley and that of his friends' agency in Pennsylvania it is probable they would all have been ineffectual. Thus that Redeemer who governs the nations, made the very man, whom Mr. Adams had countenanced in his opposition to Messiah's divinity, one of the principal instruments of degrading him from the high station to which he had been elevated." p. 147—150.

Our readers have in the foregoing extracts a fair sample of the work under review; and abundant evidence that the author has not become acquainted with a multitude of facts to no purpose. He is ingenious in connecting them together, by showing their relation to each other as causes and effects; and if he is sometimes fanciful, he is more generally just, and always plausible.

He is rather fanciful in considering President Adams as having "prodigiously accelerated the growth of heresy," in Harvard University of which he was a Trustee, and in the capital of his native state. We think it true, that all the officers in the government of that literary institution are Unitarian, unless it be the Rev. Professor M'Kean; and with the exception of the Rev. Messrs. Huntington and Dwight, every congregational minister (not of the Baptist order) in Boston, denies that Jesus Christ is a divine person, constituted by the union of a human and divine nature: still we think, that Pre-

* Life of Priestley, vol. I. p. 201, 2, 3, 4.

sident Adams and the books Dr. Priestley may have given him, had very little influence in making the churches in Boston and its vicinity Unitarian. Priestley's works were known and read there long before the President personally knew the author, at least in America. Indeed it is questionable, even now, whether Mr. Adams is any thing worse than a pliable Arminian, who thought the Chief Magistrate of a Republican Nation ought to treat so great a philosopher as Dr. Priestley was, with attention.

Should we assign reasons for the introduction of Socinianism into Boston, and for its prevalence there, they would be such as the following. The churches of Boston have been from their first organization absolutely independent: their councils for ordination have always been selected at the will of the congregation and the pastor elect; and hence if any one was elected, it was not difficult to procure his ordination and instalment. A council could be picked, in any country of independents, that would ordain almost any decent man, however erroneous he might be; especially if it was a fundamental article of their *liberal creed*, that *no creed* should be exacted from the candidate. There was a church of this description in West Boston, whose first pastor was the Rev. Mr. Mayhew. He was not deemed sound in the faith by the other churches and clergymen of his own time; and they wisely declined intercourse with him, in ministerial labours. His successor was the Rev. Dr. Howard, whom the writer personally knew. He was a grave, learned, dignified Unitarian. During the greater part of his life, the pastors of the churches declined any exchange of pulpits with him; but he was a member of their clerical association, and by the charter of Harvard University, one of its Trustees. In the latter part of his life, he used to say, in the society of his brethren, "Gentlemen, you have all come around to me, and my opinions: mine remain what they were: once no man would exchange with me; but now you all do." His intercourse with them, and his learning, especially with the younger divines, had great influence.

Dr. Chauncey was one of his cotemporaries, and he was not slothful in the propagation of his doctrine of the final restitution and salvation of all men. Two errorists would naturally unite in self-defence against the orthodox; and according to the scheme of the independents, Doctors Howard and Chauncey could form a voluntary association for the licensure of a candidate; or with a Deacon from each of their churches, a council for the organization of churches and the ordination of Pastors. What course of education and study rendered Mayhew, Howard and Chauncey heretical, we are not able to say; but this we know, that man is prone to evil, and ever ready to be misguided by the pride of reasoning and love of popularity. The facts we have already stated are corroborated by another, that when the council convened to install the Rev. Charles Lowell in the place of Dr. Howard deceased, the church which had elected him were unwilling that he should be examined as to his doctrines, or submit any creed for inspection.

Those who were licensed to preach, as many were, upon the recommendation of a single Pastor, and the exhibition of a single sermon, without any doctrinal examination, often proved to be, what some denominate "Moderate Calvinists," or "Old fashioned Arminians;" and by the inconsistencies of their plan, as we have above hinted, exposed the truth unintentionally, to the successful attacks of the Antitrinitarians with whom they familiarly associated.

A secret of the art of making Socinians of common hearers ought to be published, for the benefit all concerned. We had it some years ago from the Rev. Dr. Kirkland, now president of Harvard University. He said that he had never preached in favour of the doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and the Atonement, nor against them; and he was determined that he never would; because should he oppose them, it would alarm some of the pious old women of his charge; and should he let them alone, the natural propensity of men to liberal doctrines would soon introduce a generation that would discard those Calvinistic

tenets. He was right in his calculation, and sound in his policy; for *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* In the Presidential chair of the University, we should suppose, however, that the Doctor would think it expedient to oppose plainly these old errors of the reformation, as he must certainly deem them; and to inculcate lucidly his liberal notions; and if we verily thought his scheme consistent with the word of God, we would imitate, if not excel his zeal in making Socinians.

Mr. Willson is more correct in his exhibition of the present state of the different sections of the visible church in America, and in his estimate of the probable effects of the different Theological Schools that at present subsist, than in accounting for the heresy of Boston. He considers the Rev. John Codman, of Dorchester, as the only thorough Calvinist in Massachusetts, because he alone is known to receive the doctrine of a definite atonement, exclusively for the elect. p. 160. But to follow our author, and consider his remarks upon the character and influence of almost every President and Doctor of Divinity in the United States, whose name has ever reached our ears, is impracticable. We will just remark, that we were pleased to find in his pages, an extract from the Minutes of the General Assembly, relative to their condemnation of a book entitled "The Gospel Plan," by the Rev. William C. Davis; and that we hope this highest Judicatory of the Presbyterian church will not in future swerve from its own example of orthodoxy. Mr. Willson concludes his sketch with the observation, that "a very large majority of the professors of religion in the United States, are either Hopkinsians, or entire Arminians, and as such opposed to the doctrine of a definite atonement. The wealth of the nation is in the hands of error; and the learning is pretty equally divided. Piety is on the side of Calvinism, in all cases, though many pious men are erroneous in some of their opinions." Mr. W. is an honest man; he writes as he thinks; and

with such plainness that every reader must fully comprehend his meaning, in every sentence.

His Sketch is followed by translations from Francis Turretin on the necessity, the truth, the perfection, the substance, and the extent of the atonement. On the last article Turretin is most copious; and the whole is a rich gift to the English reader. We prize it the more because the extent of the atonement is the most important subject of controversy, next to that of Christ's divinity, which is agitated at the present day; and because Magee in his late work on the atonement, wholly omits the inquiry, whether it was made only for the elect.

In studying the Bible, we should aim at obtaining correct views, first of ourselves; secondly, of the person of the Son of God; and thirdly, of the nature of his mediatorial work. Now many will contend earnestly, as they should, for the divinity of Jesus Christ; who are quite offended that we should "make a noise," as they say, about the extent of the atonement; that is, about the nature of Christ's work. We ask, why should Jesus be a divine person, of a human and divine nature, unless the nature of his mediatorial work required it? And why should we be solicitous about inculcating right notions of Christ's person, if the nature of his work is not of primary importance? Let Dr. Morse, the Rev. Moses Stuart, Dr. Samuel Worcester, and others, attempt to teach the Rev. Messrs. Channing, Lowell, Thatcher, and the most acute Socinian living, President Kirkland, who and what Jesus Christ is, in person and nature: we wish them good speed: and as for ourselves, since we have no Socinians south of Massachusetts that seem to require much argument, unless it be the pompous gentleman just gone to Kentucky, we shall address ourselves to the work of showing from the scriptures what the Lord Jesus Christ performed as the Saviour of sinners; for he was *made perfect*, as a Mediator, *that he might become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.* Heb. v. 9. If we could think it of little importance to inquire, whether

Jesus actually was punished, so as to expiate the sins that were laid upon him; whether he rendered a legal satisfaction to divine justice, and for whom; we could then think it of proportionately little moment to ascertain whether he is God, or not; for a mere man, might have been exhibited as a martyr to the truth; and a sinful man, or a devil might have been set forth as a monument of God's hatred of sin, as a picture of the vengeance due unto us, and so have opened a door for us to escape the damnation of hell, without the possibility of its being said, that the holy God had given no satisfactory proof of his abhorrence of transgression. In short, if we would be consistent, we must all come to the acknowledgment of a plenary, definite atonement, or of no atonement; and in the latter case, we should all be Socinians together, and hail Boston not only as the cradle of American liberty, but of the last religious reformation.

“But good people, and even good ministers of Jesus differ; and shall they continue to dispute?” We reply, in the language of our author, contained in a short *appendix*, “Let all, who love our Lord Jesus Christ, love each other, discuss their differences with candour, and say to each other from the pulpit and the press, and in social intercourse, what they say of each other among their own connections. Probe the wound, lay open the sore, and then heal it.” p. 348. To you, therefore, Mr. Willson, we say, that your fears about the new version of Psalms in the Reformed Dutch Church, are groundless; and that the intercommunion in the Lord's supper, with members of different sections of the visible church, for which you impliedly censure Dr. Mason, is defensible. This we hope to prove to you, if we have not already done it in a former number, when we shall pay our respects to Dr. Mason himself. In the mean time, thou man of genius, whose fancy sometimes runs away with judgment; of fervour, faults, and powerful intellect; thou kindred spirit, adieu.