

THE  
Presbyterian Magazine.

AUGUST, 1822.

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Communications.

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FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.  
ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

(Continued from p. 296.)

I before observed, that a complete enumeration of all the offices, which the members of the church sustained, must be collected from several partial catalogues. From these, I think it evident that the ordinary and occasional officers of the church were four, which are stated in the 169th page.

As no systematic and full account of them can be found in any one place, no inference can be drawn in favour of any particular views, from the *position* of these officers in any of the scripture catalogues. But in the examination and comparison of all the accounts, in connexion with the practice of the apostles, and the instructions of Paul, we come fairly and conclusively to the conviction, that pastors and lay elders are invested with the government of the church.

To support this doctrine I further introduce Rom. xii. 6—8: “Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

“He that ruleth, with diligence,” is a sentence which conveys the idea of a distinct class of officers, who are invested with authority and power to rule in the church. The primary signification of *προϊσταμενος*, rendered “ruleth,” is to place in authority, as a ruler. Whatever interpretation, therefore, may be given of the other officers in this account, “he that ruleth,” is evidently a distinct officer. And the apostle must, I think, on the soundest principles of exegesis, intend lay elders. The character of their administration favours this conclusion. They are to rule, *in σπουδή*, with diligence. The original signifies care-

*A Synopsis of Didactic Theology.* By the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, D. D. Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: published by J. Crissy, 177 Chestnut street, opposite the State House.—pp. 308.

The work is the production of a prolific pen. The author informs us, in his preface, that it is the *eighth* member of his literary family; and that “if this EIGHTH child shall attain to the reputation and limited usefulness of any one of the former members of the same family, he will feel thankfulness, and conclude that he has not laboured in vain.” The condition of that parent is truly enviable, who is surrounded by a numerous offspring, all well settled in life, and promising to cheer him with their filial attentions and affectionate gratitude, as he descends to the tomb. Not unlike is the condition of a writer, who, feeling something of a parental attachment to the productions of his pen, has the happiness to see them making their way into the world and read with pleasure by those whose approbation he most desires. Dr. E. enjoys a portion of this felicity; he will be satisfied if this infant member of his family shall be as successful as his brothers in gaining public patronage.

We sincerely wish this young child a favourable reception. The reputation of its father, who is known as a writer, will bring it into notice, and secure to it a favourable regard at least from his friends, and we hope from others.

This synopsis, in our opinion, is calculated to assist theological students in the prosecution of their studies. They will find in it a number of valuable works recommended to their perusal under the different heads of didactic theology. Nor will its utility be confined to this class of readers; Christians in general will derive profit from the reading of this summary of the articles of their holy religion.

The work consists of a number of propositions, supported by numerous scripture quotations printed at large under each section; so that the reader is seldom put to the trouble of opening his Bible for the purpose of comparing the passages referred to with the contents of the propositions they are intended to support. Both will be found on the pages of the Synopsis.

The matter of the first chapter certainly is pertinent; but the manner in which the author attempts to support the first and fundamental truth in religion, the existence of a Supreme Being, does not, in our apprehension, accord with the design of his publication. He intended, if we mistake not, to make it a plain, popular exhibition of the great doctrines both of natural and revealed theology; an exhibition presented in a few simple propositions unattended with little or no proof, except what was derived from the texts of holy scripture subjoined to them. The

porch should accord with the building into which it conducts. We were, therefore, surprised to meet, at the opening of the volume, a long string of *axioms* and *definitions* after the manner of mathematicians. Such a scientific method is rather repulsive to common readers. Had the author given us but two definitions, one of God, and the other of a creature, and interwoven his axioms, or intuitive proofs, with the arguments by which each proposition in this chapter is maintained; and as he advanced in his train of reasoning referred to those he had already established in support of those that succeeded; he would have put the chapter in a more inviting form, lost nothing of his evidence, and carried stronger conviction to the mind of an unlearned reader. Moral subjects lose their peculiar interest, when presented in the frigid form of a mathematical demonstration. They should be exhibited in a way calculated to win the heart, as well as to convince the understanding.

A passage from a sermon of the late Dr. Smith, on this subject, is worthy of notice. That able writer observes, "But, perhaps, a deeper impression of this truth we derive from the sentiments of the heart, than from the abstractions of reason; from feeling than from speculation. Even the belief which we have of the being of God, is more a sentiment than a deduction; an instantaneous impression that forces itself irresistibly upon the mind from the contemplation of the universe, than an abstract conclusion pursued through a connected chain of anterior truths. Hence the people in all countries are not less, are perhaps even more firmly persuaded of these doctrines than the philosophers. The impressions of nature are strong, and lead to certainty; the refinements of speculation often leave the mind entangled in scepticism. The one is the work of God, the other involved and deranged by being blended with the work of man. It partakes, therefore, of the frailty and imperfection of every thing that is human."

Still, however, we should not object to a mathematical demonstration of the existence of a Supreme Being, if we found it introduced in a work where it might be expected to appear.

We agree with Dr. E. that the distinction made between the *rational* and the *moral* attributes of God is liable to an objection; but as the distinction is understood, and is found to be convenient in speaking of the Almighty, it may be continued in use until a distinction free from objection shall be suggested. The classification proposed by our author, as a substitute, we cannot prefer, because it seems to us exposed to a greater objection. The term *attribute*, is one of great latitude, and may be made to comprehend whatever is done by the Supreme Being, as well as whatever belongs to him. But when we speak of his attributes, and endeavour to classify them, the term is taken in

a restricted sense, and is synonymous with perfection. In this limited signification of the term the works of the Creator must be excluded; they form no part of his perfections. We know of no *incidental* perfections of God; all his perfections are *essential*. To divide, therefore, the perfections or attributes of Jehovah into *essential* and *incidental*, and to make the latter class of attributes comprehend his works, is confounding things entirely distinct and different, and giving to a term, in a particular connexion, an unwarrantable extent.

Chap. II. contains an exhibition of MAN'S duty, as it is inculcated by *reason*. In this chapter, we think, Dr. E. has well expressed the grounds of his obligations to discharge all the duties of piety and morality. "His obligations," he observes, "result from the character of God, the character of man, the manifestation of the divine will, and the relation which subsists between man as a creature, and God as his creator."—P. 23.

PART THE SECOND of this little volume, treats of *Revealed Theology*. The subject of the *First Chapter* is *The Holy Scriptures*. A summary of the internal evidences would have been an improvement of this chapter. Our readers will be gratified with the following observations relating to the difficulties that occur in the inspired writings, tending to show that the incomprehensibility of some of its sublime doctrines ought not to stagger our faith, any more than the incomprehensibility of many of God's works of creation and providence should hinder our belief, that they are the operations of infinite wisdom, almighty power and boundless goodness.

"Here I would remark, that we must believe many propositions to be true, the truth contained in which we do not perfectly understand. Two propositions I may believe to be true, for one and the same reason, that the proposer is competent and true; while I perfectly comprehend the meaning of one, and not at all, or but in part, of the other. For instance; when I first heard that two and two are equal to four, I believed it to be a true proposition, and I understood it; but when it was stated, *that in every right angled triangle the sum of the squares of the two legs of the right angle, are equal to the square of the hypotenuse*, I believed, because Euclid asserted it, that the proposition contained a truth, which I did not then understand.

"*That God is a Spirit*, is a proposition which I believe to be true, and of the truth contained in which I understand only a part, for while I know that a spirit has not flesh and bones, I nevertheless know not what the essence of spirit positively is.

"Upon this principle, we must believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, because God, who has asserted it, is worthy of credit. If I knew that God had asserted any proposition, I should believe it to be true, even while I did not comprehend the meaning of the terms. This is reasonable. What child does not believe many statements of its parent to be true, before it comprehends what the truth stated is? Who does not at some time understand assertions of men of veracity, which he formerly believed to be true, even before the truth was explained?

"To this it is objected, that I believe I know not what, and that it is the same as if I believed nothing. I reply, that I believe what I do thoroughly understand, about a proposition which I do not fully comprehend. *The Father, Son,*

and Holy Ghost are one God, is one statement. *The above named proposition is true, is another proposition, which I believe and comprehend. Again, I believe, that every thing asserted by God in the Bible is true, while at the same time I have no present understanding of all the true things contained in that blessed book.*—P. 33, 34.

From the *second chapter* of this part to the *sixth* inclusive, Dr. E. treats of the being of God and his mode of subsistence;—of creation, the covenant of works, and the covenant of redemption;—of the *attributes of THE FATHER*;—of the *attributes of THE SON*;—of the *attributes of THE HOLY GHOST*.

We think it incorrect to say that the Son of God, in his official character of *Mediator*, created all worlds.—P. 57. The Son of God certainly did create the universe; and to him this glorious work is ascribed by inspired writers in the most express terms. But, then, it is to be observed, that, in our apprehension, they do not consider him as *Mediator* while exerting his almighty power in the production of all worlds, but simply as the *Son of God*. Nor do we consider it as scriptural to represent the *Sonship* of Jesus Christ as founded in his *Mediatorship*; thus, making his *Sonship* and *Mediatorship* synonymous terms. We believe the Sonship of Christ is to be traced to a higher source than any official relation; we believe it to be founded in that mysterious relation which subsists by *nature* between the Father and the Son. Peter manifestly makes a distinction between these two names in his ever memorable confession: “Thou art the *Christ*,” (*anointed* or *Mediator*,) “*THE SON* of the living God.” The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, clearly teaches us to attribute to this glorious name something more than official distinction: “Though he were a *Son*, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” It is not matter of astonishment that the *Mediator* should suffer, because it was the very design of his appointment to his office; but that the *eternal Son of God*, the second person in the adorable Godhead, should assume the office of *Mediator* and suffer for the salvation of man, is indeed astonishing, and will forever furnish matter for devout and holy wonder both to angels and redeemed sinners. Our readers will permit us to introduce here some very pertinent observations on this subject, from the pen of Doctor Miller, in his admirable Letters on Unitarianism.

“Nor ought it to give rise to the least difficulty in the minds of any, that the second Person of the Trinity is called the *Son of God*; that He is said to be the only *Begotten Son*, and the *eternally Begotten*. I know that the doctrine of the *eternal generation* of the Son of God is regarded by many as implying a contradiction in terms. But here again is a most presumptuous assumption of the principle, that God is a being *altogether such an one as ourselves*. Because generation among men necessarily implies *priority*, in the order of time as well as of nature, on the part of the father, and *derivation* and *posteriority* on the part of the son, the objection infers that it must also be so in the Divine nature. But is this a legitimate, is it a rational inference? It certainly is not.

That which is true, as it respects the nature of man, may be infinitely removed from the truth, as it respects the eternal God. It has been often well observed, that, with regard to all effects which are *voluntary*, the cause must be prior to the effect; as the father is to the son, in human generation: But that in all that are *necessary*, the effect must be coeval with the cause; as the stream is with the fountain, and light with the sun. Has the sun ever existed a moment without sending out beams? And if the sun had been an eternal being, would there not have been an eternal, necessary emanation of light from it? But God is confessedly eternal. Where, then, is the absurdity or contradiction of an eternal, necessary emanation from Him, or, if you please, an *eternal generation*,—and also an *eternal procession* of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son? To deny the *possibility* of this, or to assert that it is a manifest *contradiction*, either in terms or ideas, is to assert that, although the Father is from all eternity, yet He could not *act* from all eternity; which, I will venture to assert, is as *unphilosophical* as it is *impious*. Sonship, even among men, implies no personal *inferiority*. A son may be perfectly equal, and is sometimes greatly superior to his father, in every desirable power, and quality: and, in general, he does in fact partake of the same human nature, in all its fulness and perfection, with his parent. But, still, forsooth, it is objected, that we cannot conceive of *generation* in any other sense than as implying *posteriority* and *derivation*. But is not this saying, in other words, that the objector is determined, in the face of all argument, to persist in measuring Jehovah by earthly and human principles? Shall we never have done with such a perverse begging of the question, as illegitimate in reasoning, as it is impious in its spirit? The scriptures declare that Christ is the *Son*, the *only begotten Son* of the Father; to the Son the Father is represented as saying, *Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever*: and concerning himself the Son declares, *I and my Father are one*. This is enough for the Christian's faith. He finds no more difficulty in believing this, than in believing that there is an eternal, omniscient and omnipresent Spirit, who made all worlds out of nothing, and upholds them continually by the word of his power.

"I am aware that some who maintain, with great zeal, the Divinity and atonement of Christ, reject his *eternal Sonship*, or *generation*, as being neither consistent with reason, nor taught in scripture. It does not accord, either with my plan or my inclination, to spend much time in animadverting on this aberration, for such I must deem it, from the system of gospel truth. I will only say that, to me, the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of the Saviour appears to be plainly taught in the word of God, and to be a doctrine of great importance in the economy of salvation. Of course, I view those who reject it, not merely as in error, but in very serious error; an error which, though actually connected with ardent piety, and general orthodoxy, in many who embrace it, has, nevertheless, a very unhappy tendency, and cannot fail, I fear, to draw in its train many mischievous consequences. If the title *Father*, be the distinctive title of the *first* Person of the adorable Trinity, *as such*, does not the correlative title of *Son* seem to be called for by the *second* Person, *as such*? If the second Person of the Trinity is not to be distinguished by the title of Son, what *is* his distinguishing title? By what appropriate name are we to know Him, as distinguished from the other Persons? In the form of Baptism, all the friends of orthodoxy grant that the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost* are expressive of divine personal distinctions; but if so, what good reason can be given why the *Son* should be understood differently? In short, my belief is, that the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son, is so closely connected with the doctrine of the Trinity, and the Divine character of the Saviour, that where the former is generally abandoned, neither of the two latter will be long retained. I must therefore, warn you against the error of rejecting this doctrine, even though it come from the *house of a friend*. It is a mystery, but a precious mystery, which seems to be essentially interwoven with the whole substance, as well as language, of the blessed economy of mercy.—P. 86—90.

In relation to the TRINITY Dr. E. pertinently observes :

“ On this subject I remark, that there was a time when God had not given himself a name in any human language; and that we might reasonably have expected him, when he did give himself a name, by which he would be distinguished from other beings, to employ such terms or epithets as would be calculated to convey to our minds just apprehensions. Now, the names which God has employed to make himself known to us, and the epithets and other terms which he uses in relation to himself, plainly indicate, that he is in some sense **ONE**, and in some other sense **MORE THAN ONE**.”—P. 38.

And again :

“ That the distinction, for which there is a foundation in the essence of the Deity, is three-fold and no more, is evident from 1 John v. 7, and the following argument : Every name of God used in the Bible, except these three, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is predicated by the inspired writers of each of these three, and of all the other names; but the Father is never said to be the Son, nor the Holy Ghost; the Son is never said to be the Father, nor the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost is never called either the Father or the Son. For illustration, I remark, that the *Holy One* is said to be the *Almighty*, the *only wise God*; and *Jehovah* is called *God*, and *Lord*; but if it were found written, that the Father is the Son, or the Son the Spirit, and the Spirit the Father or the Son; then we should prove, either that the essence is as manifold as the names of God in the Bible, or else that there is no foundation for any personal distinctions, relations, and operations.

“ Without reference to this argument, it would be as easy to prove *twenty* persons in the Deity as *three*, for to twenty names we may prove that the scriptures attribute some of the essential attributes of the Deity.

“ To obviate an objection which may here be made, let it be remembered, that ‘God is a *Spirit*,’ but neither the Father nor the Son is styled *raz Spirit*. The *Elohim*, or the *Aleim*, meaning the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is a *Spirit* in his substance, but the title of the *Spirit* is applied to the Holy Ghost alone. In *Isaiah ix. 5*, the Son is called the *Everlasting Father* in the English translation; but the best critics have shown, that it should be rendered, *the Father of the everlasting age*; for although the Father is *Jehovah*, and the Son is *Jehovah*, and the Holy Spirit is *Jehovah*, yet the Son is not absolutely called the *Father*. Such a use of the terms would render the names both of *Father* and *Son* utterly unmeaning.—P. 39, 40.

In Chap. VII. Dr. E. treats of *the means of grace*. His enumeration is full and worthy of attentive consideration. He shows what means of grace were appointed before, and what since the advent of our Lord, and points out those which were common to both economies.

Of **SPECIAL REVIVALS** of religion, which are considered as signal means of grace, our author gives us his views in the following propositions :

“ 1. *A revival of religion*, strictly speaking, is a work of the Spirit of all grace upon the minds of those who are already the people of God; in which he makes all the Christian graces *live again* within them; so that, recovering from a state of partial declension and slumber, they are brought to renewed considerations of divine truth; to the zealous exercise of faith, love, godly sorrow, hope, and gratitude; to unusual frequency and fervour in prayer; to a lively sense of their dependance on the Holy Spirit for success in all spiritual undertakings; to an earnest desire after the salvation of their fellow sinners, and a vigorous determination to use, so far as practicable, the various means of grace with them; to a deep conviction of the evil of sin, the worth of the soul, the importance of seeking heaven, the exposure of the impenitent to the punishments of an endless

hell, and the preciousness of Christ : and finally, to the performance of the *first works* of their espousals to the Redeemer.

"2. In answering the prayers of the saints which are thus excited, and in honouring those who thus honour him, the Redeemer sends his Holy Spirit to convince and convert sinners, through the means of grace instrumentally applied to them by revived disciples ; and the consequence is, that a greater number are brought to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth, in a short time, than are usually gathered to Christ in a much longer period, when no extraordinary exertions are made by Zion, to be rendered efficacious by the SACRIFICER.

"3. A time of revival may be considered as a harvest time of souls ; and if such a season passes by, and any, who have had an opportunity of witnessing the special outpouring of the influences of the Spirit of God, are not converted, they are chargeable with a special aggravation of their sin of unbelief ; and the probability of their ever being saved is greatly diminished.

"4. If any particular section of the visible church is visited with an extensive revival of religion, and any professors of evangelical piety are not quickened in their spiritual pursuits, humbled under a conviction of past lukewarmness, and warmed in their religious affections towards the people and cause of the Redeemer, they have great reason to doubt the truth of their own supposed conversion, and the sincerity of their professions of godliness.

"5. The blessed effects of a revival of religion upon the unrenewed members of a congregation, rarely, if ever, cease to be experienced, until the work of grace has first declined, from the encroachments of error, extravagant indulgence of feeling, weariness of body, weakness of the flesh, unprofitable contentions, want of faith, or some other cause, in the minds of God's reanimated people ; and hence they should be careful not to grieve, resist, or quench his gracious influences."—P. 155, 156.

We cannot concur with Dr. E. in believing that a *SINGLE Elder or Bishop* has power to ordain preaching *Bishops*.—P. 112.

No direction was given either to Timothy or to Titus, that would have led them to exercise the ordaining power, but in concurrence with their brethren. Timothy had been ordained with the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery* : and having been himself thus inducted into office, he would of course conclude that others were to be ordained to the work of the gospel ministry in the same way.

Nor can we accord with the interpretation put on 1 Tim. v. 17, in a note, p. 113, by which *RULING ELDERS* are represented as *Presidents* or *Moderators* of Presbyteries.

By *Ruling Elders* our author means persons ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, who did not constantly or habitually "labour in the word and doctrine," but only preached occasionally. Of such a class of ministers we have no account in holy scripture. *Aptness to teach* is laid down as an essential qualification in a preaching bishop : 1 Tim. iii. 2. It seems then reasonable to conclude, that all admitted to this sacred office, were devoted to its chief function, that of *preaching* ; and of course that none could discharge their duty merely by occasional efforts in dispensing the word in public.

That ministers might, through age and infirmity, become unable to perform the functions of their office, was to be expected as a natural occurrence in the common course of human affairs ;

but we find no intimation, in sacred scripture, that persons ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, were set apart only for an occasional, and not a habitual application to its great business. No such intimation is to be found in 1 Tim. v. 17, to which reference is made. This passage in our apprehension speaks neither of such persons, nor of presidents of presbyteries.

*Ruling Elders*, in the Presbyterian church, is the name of that class of elders who *rule*, but do *not preach*. In the text referred to, however, the phrase "*Elders who rule well*," is not restricted to one class of elders, but applies to both classes; so that no argument can be drawn from the original word *προιστῶντες*, to prove that the apostle speaks of presidents or presbyteries. All the elders were *προιστῶντες*; all ruled; all presided over the church: but while all presided, only some laboured in the word and doctrine.\* But on this subject we shall not enlarge.

From the 8th to the last chapter inclusive, the author has given a view of the duty which God requires of man, presented in an exposition of the ten commandments, under which he ranges the various injunctions on the subject of duty found in the different portions of the inspired volume. It constitutes nearly one half of the treatise. The exposition is valuable and comprehensive; it will repay the labour of an attentive perusal.

The following general principles are justly and clearly stated:

"When any law of God requires any single operation of the mind, or of the complex being man, consisting of body and mind, every thing essentially prerequisite to that operation is also required: and when God's law forbids any operation, it equally forbids any thing which will naturally produce or occasion that forbidden operation.

"These are principles of common sense, which need not be proved until they are disputed: but they may be illustrated thus: God requires *love*: but the *conception* of some lovely object, and the *judgment* that it is lovely, are essential to the exercise of *love*; and therefore these mental acts are required, when we are commanded to love. The command, that we should *believe* on the Lord Jesus, is equally a command to do every thing which is essential to the operation of the mind in believing. We must *attend to* and *consider* the *testimony* concerning Jesus, which is to be the object of faith; and we must employ our minds also on the subject of the competency and veracity of him who gives the testimony. Again, when God forbids *lustful feelings*, he equally forbids, though by implication only, all those perceptions and conceptions which are known to be incitements to libidinous sensations and motions. When, therefore, God requires love as the fulfilling of the law, he

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\* The same interpretation we apply to other texts in which the word *μαλιστα*, especially, occurs. On examination it will be found that in these passages the first member is *universal*, the second *particular*. For example, Gal. vi. 10. "As we have, therefore, opportunity let us do good unto *all men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." The first member of this text is *universal*, it comprehends all men; the second is *particular*, it draws a class from this universal assemblage. The injunction is that we do good to all men, whether Christians or not, but, especially to the Christians, or "those who are of the household of faith." In the same manner 1 Tim. iv. 10, and 1 Tim. v. 8, are to be explained.

demands every thing which is requisite to the existence and continued operation of such feelings of love, as will induce him who loves God and man perfectly, to keep the whole law. Deut. iv. 9. "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life." 1 Thess. v. 22. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Matt. xii. 7. "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the innocent." Here right knowledge would have prevented a wrong action. Prov. iv. 23, 26. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.—Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

"There are certain operations of man, which the constitution, given him by God, renders natural to him, and which, being neither required nor forbidden by any law of God, are in themselves neither morally good, nor morally evil; but they are nevertheless naturally good or naturally evil for mankind. For instance, God has neither forbidden nor required man to have certain perceptions of light through his eyes, and yet it is a pleasant thing to behold any beautiful, luminous object; but a protracted view of the sun is painful.

"To hear melodious sounds which reach our ears, to perceive fragrant odours from effluvia wafted to us from the flowers of the garden, and the new-mown hay, are naturally good mental operations; while to hear hoarse croaking discords, and to smell the scent of carrion, are naturally evil perceptions. None of these perceptions are the subjects of divine legislation. We may say the same of the sensations of cold and heat from the state of the atmosphere; of feeling hunger and thirst; of many conceptions of natural objects; of acts of consciousness; of our constitutional judgments; and of involuntary remembrance. All instinctive operations, and the performance of the involuntary animal functions of our nature come under the same law."—P. 165—167.

"Holy faith is any act of the judgment, that some proposition of God's testimony is true, which is exercised in consequence of our regard to the character of God, who delivers the testimony."—P. 173. That faith has for its object some proposition of God's testimony, and that it is an act of the judgment, is undoubtedly true: but in the nature of that faith which the scriptures require, there is something more than an act of the judgment; the heart is concerned, and yields its homage to the truth, by embracing offered mercy, and consenting to be saved by Jesus Christ. The term *faith* is, we apprehend, used in this latitude by the sacred writers. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble:" James ii. 19. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name:" John i. 12. "For with the HEART man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. x. 10. "And Philip said," unto the eunuch who had requested baptism, "If thou believest with ALL THINE HEART, thou mayest:" Acts viii. 37. From these and other texts that might be cited, we may learn what ideas the sacred writers affix to the term *faith*. They manifestly use it as including an act of the heart, as well as an act of the judgment, or assent of the mind; and it is the duty of theologians to use it in the same latitude of meaning, without regarding the definitions of philologists or the affected precision

of speculating metaphysicians. The inspired use of any term is paramount authority. A better definition of faith in Christ cannot be given than that in the Shorter Catechism: "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel." In connexion with these remarks it is proper to inform the reader, lest he should misapprehend the views of our author, that he distinctly states that "we are brought to exercise this (holy) faith by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit in governing our minds; and" that "the effects of it will always be such feelings, volitions, and conduct as correspond with the testimony believed."—P. 174.

"Every natural man," Dr. E. correctly observes, "ought sincerely to desire and ask for those influences of the Holy Ghost which will bring him to the exercise of acts of holy faith; and he may, while unrenewed, have many naturally, though no morally good motives, for willing to pray for such a blessing. Such prayers we have before shown, may be, and often are, answered by the God of all grace."—P. 174.

J. J. J.

(To be continued.)

*A Dissertation on the Importance of Biblical Literature, by Charles Hodge, A. M. Teacher of the Original Languages of Scripture in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton. Trenton, printed by George Sherman, 1822.—pp. 51.*

This dissertation was delivered before "a society formed in the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, for improvement in Biblical Literature." The author was induced to publish it at the suggestion of gentlemen to whose opinion he pays the highest deference. In giving this advice these gentlemen consulted the reputation of Mr. Hodge. How correctly they acted will appear to any one who reads the dissertation, and especially, if he recollect the youth of the author.

In this dissertation Mr. Hodge discusses the two branches of Biblical Literature, *Criticism* and *Interpretation*. In the first division, he sketches a history of Biblical criticism from the time of the celebrated ORIGEN, with whom it originated in the third century, down to the present day. In this brief history he notices JEROME, the astonishing industry of the MASORITES in taking care of the Hebrew text, MAIMONIDES and other Jews in the twelfth century, CAPELLUS, and WALTON, &c. down to GRIESBACK.

Having given this historical sketch, he shows, in reference, first to the OLD, and then to the NEW TESTAMENT, that this branch of literature comprehends a history of the sacred text—an inquiry into the sources of the errors that have affected its purity—a consideration of the means of their correction—and

THE  
**Presbyterian Magazine.**

SEPTEMBER, 1822.

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**Communications.**

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FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

**STRICTURES ON DR. SAMUEL CLARK'S DEMONSTRATION OF THE  
BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**

It is by creation alone that we are made acquainted with the existence and attributes of God; for the invisible things of him from the foundation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. The title of Dr. Clark's performance, a demonstration, *a priori*, is, therefore, peculiarly unsuitable, being equally contradictory to this passage of sacred writ, as it is unmeaning in itself.

The principal source of error in this work seems to be a desire of introducing into moral subjects a species of argumentation by no means adapted to them. It is evident, indeed, that his *a priori* argument, as he terms it, is nothing more than the *a posteriori* mode of proof, peculiarly digested to suit his own conceptions; still, however, he keeps a wishful eye upon the "strictly demonstrative" process, by which he hopes forever to silence "the learned and metaphysical" objectors; and, in order to get a starting place, he is necessitated to lug in principles either wholly unintelligible, or utterly inadmissible. No wonder then that such a heterogeneous mass, when fused by the intensity of his intellect, issued in a production which almost defied analysis. Dr. C.'s reasoning, as to the moral perfections of God, seems to me to be much preferable to the preceding part of his dissertation, and much less characterized by the *cui lumen ademptum*. I do not believe that he establishes the moral perfections of God to a certainty, yet his arguments carry with them that degree of unsatisfactory probability which, by totally disquieting the mind, fits it for the immersion of the light of the gospel. Further than this we need not attempt to push the in-

ciples of the Protestant reformation; and, from what we can learn, they correspond exactly, in this respect, with the discourses delivered every Sabbath in the chapel of that college. We think this a real honour to the institution; if not a *peculiar* honour, it is certainly not a very common one, under circumstances in any considerable degree similar. We very much doubt whether a more striking instance of exemption from all just charge of "*catering for a sect*," can be produced from all the annals of academical preaching, than is to be found in the present volume.

The "*Notes*" subjoined to these Discourses, are all of them valuable, and some of them eminently so. Indeed a part of them will, no doubt, be regarded by many readers as more interesting than the preceding portion of the volume. The "*Historical Sketch of the College, from its Origin to the Accession of President Witherspoon*," which occupies 124 closely printed pages, will, we are persuaded, be highly pleasing to all those who take an interest in literary institutions, and especially to the *alumni* of the college. We sincerely hope the reverend author will find leisure and strength to continue it up to the close of President Smith's administration, (as he intimates in one of the notes,) and that the next edition of these Discourses, which we shall be gratified to see speedily called for, will contain the "*History*" complete.—Perhaps, however, a still better plan would be, to complete and publish the "*History of the College*" in a detached form. If what is to come should prove as voluminous as what has been given, (and we should calculate that it must necessarily be more so,) the whole would undoubtedly make an octavo volume, in suitable type of the ordinary size. In this case, we would respectfully suggest to the venerable author, whether he might not, in the next edition of the Discourses, to the profit, and very much to the gratification of his readers, fill up the space now occupied by the "*Historical Sketch*," with three or four additional sermons, out of that ample store of excellent ones which he possesses, and with which he has so frequently from the pulpit delighted and instructed his hearers.

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*A Synopsis of Didactic Theology.* By the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, D. D. Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: published by J. Crissy, 177 Chestnut street, opposite the State House.—pp. 308.

(Continued from page 345.)

In explaining the first commandment, our author shows how it requires the conceptions, the apprehensions, the memory, the

judgment, reason, emotions, and every faculty of the soul to be rightly exercised.

It is to be regretted that in a Christian country it is necessary, in explaining the second commandment, to observe :

“If any persons really worship the relics of saints, the saints themselves, the Virgin Mary, the sacramental bread and wine, carved images, or other representations of Christ, or any other visible or tangible form, of which they may conceive, they are as truly chargeable with idolatry, as the pagans who adore wood, gold, stone, clay, serpents, rivers, crocodiles, and twenty thousand divinities.

“Praying to the Virgin Mary, and to any of the spirits of departed saints, is idolatrous worship, and supposes them to be possessed of the attributes of omniscience and omnipresence, which belong to Jehovah alone. Deut. iv. 23, 24. ‘Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.’—P. 193.

Equally humiliating, yet equally pertinent, is the following remark :

“If men think to please God by abstinence from all animal food, and by celibacy, when his providence does not require these things; by shutting themselves up in convents; by adding cream, oil, and spittle to water used in baptism; by offering up the host as a sacrifice; by burning tapers for other purposes than that of giving light; by binding wafers to the dying; by confessing secret sins to their fellow men; by giving and receiving absolution from men; or by doing any other thing as an act of religious worship, which God has not required in his word, they err, not knowing the scriptures, and violate the second article in the decalogue.”—P. 196.

Probably not a few of our readers will feel themselves reproved, when they peruse the following extract from Dr. Ely’s exposition of the third commandment :

“We are forbidden to take God’s name in vain, by *praying* inconsiderately, insincerely, without meaning what we say, without solemnity, submission, and love; or for such things as God has forbidden us to desire. Those persons who cry, ‘God bless you,’ ‘God bless me,’ ‘Good Lord,’ ‘O Lord,’ ‘Lord have mercy,’ in common conversation, and do not intend seriously to pray, take God’s name in vain. The same is true, in a degree, of those serious persons, who in prayer use some of the names of God to rest upon, and keep up the sound of their voice, until they can think of something else to offer. We should never cry out, ‘O Lord,’ unless we design solemnly to address God, and present either adoration, confession, petition, or thanksgiving.

“Imprecations of evil against our fellow men, and all denunciation of curses, excepting such as God has authorized, are also violations of this sacred precept.

“To utter or countenance the mock prayers, vows and oaths of the stage is a horrible violation of this command.”—P. 198.

The author of this Synopsis was born and educated in New England, and of course accustomed to the prevailing practice of observing the Sabbath from the evening of Saturday to that of the Lord’s day. But he has freed himself from the prejudice of those who imagine that practice required by divine authority. On this subject, in explaining the fourth commandment, he makes these just remarks :

"But the Bible has in no place required other nations to reckon their days in the same manner; or in any particular way. It is simply demanded of them to keep the first day in every week as a Sabbath.

"It must be manifest, let the Sabbath day be commenced when it may, whether at sunset, midnight, or sunrise, that there must be the difference of twelve hours between every different set of antipodes; for when it is midnight to us, it must be noon-day to those who inhabit the same meridian on the opposite hemisphere; and when the sun rises here it sets there; so that it would be impossible for all the people of the globe to observe the Sabbath on the same hours, according to any established diurnal measurement."—P. 210.

Of the correctness of the practice prevailing in the Presbyterian church in regard to the time appropriated in obedience to this commandment, we apprehend our readers, who have attentively weighed the arguments, so candidly and ably urged in two preceding numbers, by M. H., are fully satisfied.\*

In explaining the sixth commandment, Dr. E. assigns as the reason why abstinence from the use of the blood of animals was enjoined, that it was intended "to teach mankind a due regard to human life." p. 234. This may be admitted as one reason of the prohibition; but the principal reason was, we believe, the appropriation of animal blood to the purpose of making an atonement, and its consequent reference to the blood of our Saviour shed for the remission of sins.

We fully accord with the author, in his sentiments in regard to the obligation imposed on human society to put the murderer to death. It is false humanity to suffer such a high offender to escape a punishment enjoined, as we believe, on civil government by the authority of the Supreme Lawgiver of heaven and earth. Opposition to his wise appointment, in this case, can never promote the interests of mankind. There may be in such

\* It has been asked, why in the account of the creation the evening precedes the morning, in that phrase so often repeated, "And the evening and the morning were the first day;" if the day did not begin with the evening. We offer the following answer.

As the night is distinguished from the day, it is manifest, that by the term day is not meant the space of four-and-twenty hours, but only that portion of them which is not occupied by night. It follows, therefore, that the circumstance of the evening preceding in arrangement the morning, cannot be founded on the fact that the day begins with the evening; because it certainly commences with the morning.

The production of the first day was light; and as light was instantaneously brought into existence, it clearly appears that the first day began with light, or in the morning.

No portion of the works of the six days, it is conceived, was done at night; all, we presume, was accomplished, in every part of the world, during the continuance of light; and yet, as the earth is spherical, the accomplishment of each day's labour, over the whole world, occupied, we may believe, the space of twenty-four hours. Every where then the work began with the light and terminated with the light; and as it ended in all places with the evening, it was natural, in expressing the space of time, to begin at the close, to place the evening first, and say, "And the evening and the morning were the first day," &c.

conduct an appearance of benevolence, but it is not that benevolence which the law of God requires. That humanity which suffers a murderer to escape the punishment of death, is *cruelty* to society at large.

"When one man has wilfully killed another, he is a murderer; and it is the duty of mankind to put the murderer to death. The executioner of a murderer obeys, instead of violating the sixth commandment; because the capital punishment of such offenders is a lawful means of preserving human life. Gen. ix. 5, 6. 'And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' This was a law given to Noah as the head of the human family after the deluge; and through him to his whole posterity: and not being a peculiar part of the civil policy of the Jews, or any part of the ceremonial law, it has never been abolished or repealed by Jehovah. Prov. xxviii. 17. 'A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.'

"This universal law, requiring of all mankind the punishment of the murderer by death, was afterwards specially enjoined upon the Hebrew nation, as a part of their penal code; and wise regulations were enacted to preserve men from capital punishment as murderers, who might have been chargeable with nothing more than justifiable, or unintentional homicide. It is the indispensable duty of all governments to punish the murderer with death; and it would be wise in all to imitate the theocratical policy of the Jews, so far as to allow every accused person a fair trial before disinterested judges. Num. xxxv. 30—34. 'Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die. Moreover, ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.'—P. 235.

Every Christian will anticipate with delight that blissful period, when "wars shall cease to the ends of the earth;" when men "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;" when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Hail happy day! when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Every friend of mankind will wish success to those *Peace Societies*, which, in this country, and in other parts of the Christian world, are labouring to arrest the progress of that dreadful evil which has so long ravaged the world with its dire calamities, and destroyed the human species in such vast numbers. But cordially as we wish the extirpation of war from the face of the earth, we apprehend that many by pleading against the lawfulness of *defensive* war, obstruct the accomplishment of their benevolent design. They mistake their

duty, and condemn what the authority of the Highest has sufficiently and plainly sanctioned.

"Sec. V. Men may wage defensive war without violating, and even in obeying the sixth commandment.

"Prov. xx. 18. 'With good advice make war.' Prov. xxiv. 6. 'By wise counsel thou shalt make thy war.' 1 Chron. v. 19, 20, 22. 'And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab. And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was entreated of them; because they put their trust in him.—There fell down many slain, because the war was of God.' Abraham waged war in defence of his kinsman Lot, and seems to have met with divine approbation in so doing. Gen. xvi. 14—20. 'When Abraham heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.—And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and he said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand.' This Melchizedek is celebrated as a peculiar type of Christ, and he evidently blessed Abram for his bold exploit in defending his kinsman Lot, against his captors. It does not appear that Abraham was guided in this warfare by any special revelation and commission; but he seems to have acted on the principle that it was his duty to defend himself, and family, and kindred, from the effects of offensive war by force of arms. Had this warfare on the part of Abraham been considered as murder by Jehovah, it is incredible that he should not have been divinely censured in those records which make frequent mention of this patriarch, and present him as the example for believers. Under similar circumstances we ought to say with Joab to our fellows, (2 Sam. x. 12.) 'Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God: and the Lord do that which seemeth him good.'

"When soldiers applied to John the Baptizer, to know their duty, he did not forbid them to bear arms; but implied that they might do it, with good conscience. Luke iii. 14. 'And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.'

"Self-defence may be lawfully carried so far as to take away the life of one who commits burglary in the night. Exod. ii. 2. 3. 'If a thief be found breaking up, and he be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him, for he should make full restitution.'

"Not to be chargeable with indirectly killing ourselves or others in an unlawful manner, we must resist force with force, and even disarm by death those who lift up deadly weapons against us. Neh. iv. 14. "Fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.'"—P. 240.

J. J. J.

(To be continued.)

ERRATUM.—In this review, p. 361, tenth line from bottom, for *national*, read *natural*.

FROM THE MISSIONARY HERALD.  
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.  
*Sixth Report.*

The report commences with a very respectful notice of the late president of the society, and thus mentions the election of a successor.

THE  
**Presbyterian Magazine.**

OCTOBER, 1822.

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**Communications.**

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FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

**HINTS TO PROFESSORS.**

There are some sorts of admonition and reproof which do not seem so proper in the pulpit as elsewhere. Censure, that strikes at the pride of domestic life, the love of show, and many other circumstances that are relatively criminal, does not often prove beneficial to a large auditory. Each individual is disposed to look around in search of some one, to whom the admonitory address may better apply than to himself. Thus it happens, that he for whom the remarks may have been principally intended, is nothing the gainer, but may be much the loser. Now a public journal obviates this difficulty. The man who turns over its pages and discerns a fair portraiture of his own life, delineated in the most striking colours, cannot parry off the blow, and fix the charge on his neighbour. He feels the address to be altogether personal; and if he be none the better for what he reads at the time, he will doubtless find his advantage in it hereafter, unless he be given up to the delusions of the devil.

Let it not be supposed that I object to any sort of wholesome truth from the sacred desk. All I insist upon is, that some subjects may be more advantageously treated out of the pulpit than in it; and of this description is the topic now about to be considered.

The pride of life, it is to be feared, greatly mars the beauty of many a promising profession, and tarnishes many a character which, under different circumstances, might shine with increasing lustre. Alas! the pride of the human heart is its greatest curse; it was the first canker-worm that despoiled a human soul, and it continues to be the peace-destroying serpent whose poisonous venom taints the streams of life. Oh what havoc is it now making in our world! How is it polluting the sweets

The deist not only refuses to admit the most conclusive evidence, but would substitute for it a *felo de se* witness; an unattainable and unsatisfactory kind of testimony, as though he were wiser than Infinite Wisdom; yet these are the persons who style themselves *freethinkers*, just as though *freethinking* and *nonthinking* would lead a man to the same conclusion. If, however, to this Proteus class we apply the restoring wand, we shall find them "an evil and adulterous generation, seeking after a sign, but no sign shall be given it:" "John came neither eating nor drinking," what have ye to say to this ye infidels? "he hath a devil:" but "the Son of man came eating and drinking;" what now? "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine bibber." Revelation was established by miracles, "but I want a miracle myself." It exhibits to you daily miracles in the development of its prophecies, and the transforming efficacy of its doctrines; "my reason is a sufficient guide to me, I know my wants better than my Creator does:" "but wisdom is justified of her children;" you are a sign to yourselves; your unbelief and rejection of it, is itself a strong evidence of the truth and purity of the sacred scriptures. If Paine, at each subsequent period of his life, had "not found the Bible and Testament to be much worse books than he had before conceived," it would instead of diminishing the probability of their spuriousness, been a great increase to it: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Ye have one sign, the well-attested death and resurrection of Him who is mighty to save; if ye believe not this, even the heathen shall rise up in judgment against you to condemn you; ye have Moses and the prophets, hear them. The proofs of their being from God are strong and satisfactory—if you hear not these your case is really a desperate one, which no human exertions, no power of demonstration can ever remedy.

J. K.

*A Synopsis of Didactic Theology.* By the Rev. Ezra Stiles Ely, D. D. Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: published by J. Crissy, 177 Chestnut street, opposite the State House.—pp. 308.

(Concluded from p. 429.)

The *sixth* commandment has planted a hedge around our property; but the selfishness of human nature is so great, that multitudes break through an enclosure which the interests of mankind require to be regarded as sacred. There are several

passages in the exposition of this article of the Decalogue which deserve to be selected.

The secret purloining of domestics is justly rebuked by Dr. E.

“**SEC. III.** Servants think it no harm, to take now and then something belonging to their masters; but it is stealing, if they could not take the same with permission. Would you lay your hand upon the thing, were the eyes of your employer upon you? Withdraw it, then, for if conscience makes your hand tremble, touch not, taste not; it is theft. ‘But it is of no great value; and our masters will not miss it.’ Is it worth taking? Then it is valuable; you know not what are their designs, or what may be its consequence, under particular circumstances. Ask for it: if they are willing to spare it, you will gain lawful possession: for otherwise you are as guilty, for taking the value of three cents, as of three hundred dollars. ‘Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity.’ Tit. ii. 9, 10.”—P. 259.

Let children attend to the following observation on the progress of the vice of stealing :

“Many who have concealed some plaything found at school or elsewhere, and used as if it were their own, have afterwards become more daring thieves. From the concealing of a penknife, which has peculiar charms for children, they have gone to the robbing of a pear-tree; from pilfering out of gardens the tempting melons, to the plundering of a cornfield, a cellar, or store-house; and from house-breaking to murder and the scaffold.”—P. 264.

Not a few who have passed the years of discretion, will do well to regard the just remarks that are made in some subsequent sections of this chapter.

“More property is stolen under the pretence of *trade*, than in every other manner. The merchant too often bows obsequiously, has the best of every thing, tells you none of his neighbours will deal so fairly by you as himself; and asserts that every thing you may please to fancy is the very best in his collection of merchandise.”—P. 265.

“Make no uncommon pretensions to friendship in trade, for there is knavery in such kindness. Any one who purchases without an intention of paying, or without seeing probable means of satisfying just demands upon him, is really no better than a person who should come in the night and drive your oxen from their stalls. Yet it is the maxim of some, ‘if you must sink, sink in deep water;’ or in other words, if you must break and cannot pay all your debts, make as many more, and cheat as many persons as possible. Be as much a knave as possible! These principles of iniquity have become very fashionable, in some well-dressed thieves, that strut at large, and tell you, by their daily expenses, that they closed their business to retire from the bustle of the world and live like gentlemen of pleasure. Under the solemnity of an oath, in the name of God, what are these persons? Thieves and robbers! For knowingly to involve an innocent man under the pretence of trade, is carrying away, contrary to his consent and knowledge, his hard-earned interest, to support our extravagance.

“To procure bondsmen, when your own credit is not good, when you know they must advance the money, is stealing from the man who desires kindly to assist you: this is a mixture of ingratitude and theft! To practise fraud in procuring a policy of insurance; or to destroy privately the articles insured is theft; plain, shameful theft.”—P. 266.

Alas! how frequently is this commandment violated by merchants, shopkeepers, and heads of families, in the manner stated in the eleventh section.

“**SEC. XI.** Unnecessary delay in the settlement of accounts, and in the payment of debts, often takes away, contrary to his consent, our neighbour's property. Punctuality is not only the life of business, but honesty; for one negligent man may derange a great many payments, and put numbers to needless expense. Hired servants are most likely to suffer from this source, for there are many esteemed 'a good sort of people,' who think it no part of honesty to be just to servants. I have known domestics, who have made themselves slaves for years, without being able to bring their employers to a settlement, or to find themselves convenient apparel for public worship. What could they do? they are helpless, they have kept no book account; and are unable to employ an attorney and purchase justice: they must suffer, or their employers must be just men, rendering to every one what is due. 'The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again.' 'The wages of him that is hired, shall not abide with thee all night until the morning,' was a general rule for the Jews, that the day labourer's family might not suffer hunger.”—P. 267.

The *tenth* commandment refers to all the preceding precepts in the second table, and shows in what a spiritual manner they are to be explained.

“This last commandment is more extensive than any other of the second table; for it forbids *any inordinate emotion* towards our neighbour, or any of his possessions. Obey this, and you will perform your whole duty towards your fellow men; for without coveting the honour, authority and liberty of parents, none would dishonour them: without coveting a man's life, none would unlawfully take it away; and without coveting his neighbour's wife, estate, or character, no man would practise adultery, theft, or false witness.”—P. 275.

To this Synopsis Dr. E. has subjoined two notes containing valuable matter. There are, however, some expressions in them with which we do not accord; we deem it incorrect to say, as he does in p. 295, that by “Jehovah's withdrawing his positive influence to holiness,” Adam was reduced to a state of trial. We believe that all that divine influence imparted to man in his primitive state was continued till he had committed sin; that his state of trial commenced from the moment of his existence; and consequently no withdrawing of divine influence was at all necessary to constitute this state of probation. In p. 300, the author advances the same idea, and connects it with this observation: “His (Adam's) holiness was a proof of God's sufficiency to make a creature holy and happy; but no evidence that ever an innocent creature is able to preserve himself in a state of purity and felicity.” That the original holiness of man was the gift of God is not to be doubted; nor ought it to be doubted that innocent man had imparted to him full and ample moral ability to keep all the requirements of the divine law; and if he did possess this ability, there is no impropriety in affirming, that in the exercise of this gift of God, he was “able to preserve himself in a state of purity and holiness.” Yet, at the same time, it must be admitted, that with all the glorious endowments of his holy nature man was not free from danger; he was liable to fall; he did fall; but then he fell through neglect of watchfulness against temptation, and of the due exercise of his original powers.

The statement of Dr. E. implies, that the condition of man was deteriorated by the covenant which God was pleased to make with him. In his first state he was preserved by divine influence, and secured from any wrong operations of his faculties; but, in his second state, he was deprived of that divine influence, and thus exposed to the danger of apostacy. This is not the representation to which we have been accustomed. In our opinion the condition of Adam was improved by the covenant; so that it became less perilous than it would have been, if he had been left under operation of the law in its simple form. In this case he would have been liable to fall in various ways, and no limit would have been set to the time of his trial. But when the covenant was established with him, it is believed that the term of trial was fixed, and probably his danger was circumscribed, so as to be confined to that single point to which the prohibition relative to a particular fruit referred. Had he guarded against this act of disobedience, divine influence would perhaps have preserved him from all other sins.

The statement we have made of Adam's power, is consistent even with the peculiar signification attributed by Dr. E. to the terms "MENTAL POWER or *ability* to do any action." He contends that the word power includes the  *motive*, as well as the  *faculty*; and that a man has the power of reading, while he is reading; but so soon as he ceases to read, he ceases to have the power, p. 297. We do not complain of any obscurity in the passage to which we refer; for the author has made his meaning plain enough. But we cannot forbear to say, that this is assigning a meaning to the term  *power*, widely different from what we have been accustomed to give it, and widely different from what is usually given to it. The  *power* to do an action is one thing; the  *exercise* of that power another thing; and a  *motive* to exercise that power a third thing. A man may possess the power, when he does not exercise it; he may have a motive to exercise that power presented to his mind, when he chooses to resist its influence; or he may yield to the influence of the motive, and exercise his power.

But admitting for a moment this signification given by the author to the term  *power*, yet while Adam continued to obey the law of God, he doubtless had the power of obeying; and, as long as he actually did obey the law, he actually did preserve himself in a state of purity and felicity; and consequently was able thus to preserve himself. This power it is true, he lost by his apostacy; but while he obeyed he retained it; and so long as he retained it, he was able to preserve himself in a state of purity and felicity. This is not pleading for man's independence on God; he was entirely dependent on his Creator for

every thing; he possessed nothing which he did not receive from infinite munificence. We only plead in favour of man's glorious endowments in his primitive state; we only affirm that man was created in God's image and likeness.

"We cannot repent for Adam's sin, but we may hate it," says Dr. E., p. 307. Why can we not repent on account of this sin, as well as hate it? Why may not sinners, who virtually approve of it by their misconduct, change their mind and disapprove of it? Why may we not lament Adam's apostacy, and be sorry that he has ruined the world by his disobedience? What is this but repentance? When Daniel fasted and prayed; when he humbled himself before God, and confessed the sins of his people and their rulers, did he not repent? was he not sincerely sorry on account of them?

We cordially approve of the view Dr. E. has given of the nature and extent of sin.

"Some are pleased to define sinfulness, in such a manner as to exclude every thing but actual transgressions. Others make it consist wholly in a wrong act of the will. We have no objection to their definition but this, that it is not consonant to the language of the Bible. If they choose to affirm that nothing shall be called SINFUL, but an actual volition which is contrary to the law of God, we affirm, that many things are offensive to God and destructive to the souls of men, which they do not allow to be sinful. 'The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.' Prov. xv. 26. We affirm that sin 'is any transgression of the law,' and it is also 'any want of conformity unto' the revealed will of Heaven. A moral defect, a neglect of duty, an innate depravity, an injurious thought, we denominate sinful. Any thing in the nature of a moral agent which separates him from the holy God, any action which is forbidden, any moral impurity, or deficiency, is represented by the same general word. Sin is taken in this extensive sense for all sinfulness in the declaration that 'by one man sin entered into the world;' for the apostle did not intend to convey merely the truth, that positive crimes have entered into the world by one man; but that through Adam every moral evil had entered; and especially that depravity of man which is the cause of actual transgression. At any rate, we have as good a right to define the meaning of the words which we use as other teachers, and we wish to be understood to assert that by one man entered into the world all the moral evil, and its consequences; which subsist in the family of Adam. David says, 'in sin did my mother conceive me;' in which place the word *sin* is applied to a fallen state, and not to a moral action. Ps. li. 5. Solomon says, 'the thought of foolishness is sin.' Prov. xxiv. 9. Not to perform a vow which is lawful in itself; and not to believe in Jesus Christ, is *SIN*. Deut. xxiii. 2. and John xvi. 9. Indeed the neglect of any duty is as much sin, as the violation of any positive precept; and all wickedness, impurity of thought, irregularity of desire, is as much sin as a rebellious operation of the will."—P. 301.

On the whole, we consider this Synopsis as a valuable performance. We hope that many may read it, and that those who read it may be edified and built up in holy faith and Christian obedience.

J. J. J.