

THE  
BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

---

OCTOBER, 1835.

---

No. IV.

---

*Ashbel Green*

ART. I.—*Address delivered to the Theological Students of the Princeton Seminary, N. J., at the close of the semi-annual Examination in May, 1835.* By ASHBEL GREEN, D.D.

MY BELOVED YOUNG BRETHREN—*Candidates for the Gospel Ministry:*

For the fourth, and probably the last time, it has become my duty to address you—on your retiring, for a short period, from this Seminary. On a former occasion, when this service was allotted to me, I endeavoured to show, among other things, that it is erroneous and idle to expect that improvements may be made in revealed or Christian Theology, similar to those which have been, and still may be made, in the secular sciences. This opinion has since been controverted in this place; and, as I am persuaded, not only of the justness of the opinion, but of its great importance, I propose at this time to offer something in its vindication, and something to expose what I apprehend to be the dangerous tendency of its opposite.

The whole argument opposed to the sentiments I have heretofore advocated, and am still disposed to maintain, so far as I have seen or heard, is one of analogy. It may be summarily stated thus:—Since it is undeniable that, in modern times, great discoveries and improvements have been

garded. To their envy, or blindness, did he impute their doubts of the propriety of his course. He had a light of his own, and by it "he saw a hand they could not see." All the known means of kindness and expostulation have been tried to induce him to abandon his peculiarities, but without success. It is the clear duty of the Church now to meet him and his co-reformers with open and firm opposition. Let us not be deluded with the idea that opposition will exasperate and do harm. Under cover of the silence and inaction which this fear has already produced, this fanaticism has spread, until now twelve thousand copies of such a work as these Lectures on Revivals are called for by its cravings. And there is danger that this spirit will spread still more extensively. The elements of fanaticism exist in the breast of every community, and may be easily called into action by causes which we might be disposed to overlook as contemptible.

We conclude this article, as we did our former, by pointing out to Mr. Finney his duty to leave our church. It is an instructive illustration of the fact that fanaticism debilitates the conscience, that this man can doubt the piety of any one who uses coffee, and call him a *cheat*, who sends a letter to another on his own business, without paying the postage, while he remains, apparently without remorse, with the sin of broken vows upon him. In this position we leave him before the public. Nor will we withdraw our charges against him, until he goes out from among us, for he is not of us.

---

*John S. Hart,*

ART. VII.—*On the extent of the Atonement, in its relation to God and the Universe.* By THOMAS W. JENKYN. *With an Introduction,* by the REV. DANIEL L. CARROLL, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. Boston, pp. 334. 1835.

THIS book is, in itself, a very trifling affair, and would not have been noticed at all, but for its "Introduction by the Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Brooklyn," and, what has pained us still more, the publication of some of his most extravagant terms of praise, on the cover of the Mis-

sionary Herald. The most striking peculiarity of the book is its almost total disregard to Scriptural authority. Scriptural language is sometimes introduced, but it is only to improve the sound, or turn a period. Strange as it may seem, here is a professed and extended treatise on the Atonement, in which there is not the slightest allusion to any of those words by which the sacred writers have described it, nor even an attempt at a critical exegesis of any term or phrase whatever, in the Bible. Without any embarrassing diffidence or hesitation, the author launches out into the subject, as if gifted with a plenary inspiration to inform the church what is and what is not the atonement, untrammelled by the authority of Scripture, or the formalities of logic. And yet, like all writers of his class, he is forever harping upon "human systems," "departure from apostolical simplicity," and "the progress of the new *Scriptural* theology."

Another feature of the book is, its constant and wanton misrepresentations of the opinions of others. We had intended to give specimens, but cannot, for want of room. To quote every instance would be to republish a large part of the volume; and as to reference, we need only say, one cannot look amiss. In connexion with his misrepresentations, should be mentioned, his perpetual cant of a "commercial atonement." He rings his changes upon these terms, till the reader sickens with the pointless repetition.

The definiteness and precision of his ideas may be estimated from his observations on the nature of moral government.

"We keep our oxen to the plough by *physical force*, but we keep the ploughman at his work by *moral government*; that is, by giving him sufficient motives and inducements." p. 127.

"Physical force can never become an element of a moral government. In proportion as force enters it, it ceases to be a moral government. *The more freedom there is in a government, the more purely moral it is.*" p. 127.

Ergo, whatever acts without physical constraint, whether man or dog, is under a moral government!

The following will serve the purpose of showing what Dr. Carroll calls "clear, cogent *argument*, absolutely irrefutable." We quote it precisely as it stands, italics, capitals, dashes, and all.

"Evil is not the product of mind. Sin is not the result of design and

arrangement. Suppose I were to say that the annihilation of the world would be an act of Omnipotence; I should be speaking what is absurd; for I should make almighty power to act——for what? to *do nothing*. It is highly inconsistent to suppose Omnipotence, in effort or at work, to produce——*nothing*. And it is as inconsistent, though we may not perceive the incongruity so distinctly, to suppose evil to be the product of mind, and purpose, and decree in God. God does nothing but *good*. To purpose *not* to do good is to purpose to do NO-thing, and a purpose to do NO-thing is surely NO purpose, NO decree; that is, the absence, or the reverse of good, is not the product of design, evil is not the result of arrangement." p. 89.

"Gainsay it who can."

"As it is a general impression, that an event to be certain must be decreed, I crave the indulgence of a few lines, even at the charge of metaphysical prolixity, to show that *an event may be certain without being decreed*. . . . . The whole is greater than its part:" (this an *event!*) "two straight lines cannot enclose a space: one and two will not make four: if two mountains are created, there must be a valley between them. No decree can make these things otherwise." p. 98.

As a specimen of the Calvinism recommended by a Presbyterian minister to the Presbyterian church, we subjoin the following extracts.

"It should not be evaded nor blinked, that the divine plans are susceptible of failures. . . . . It is a morbid squeamishness that makes us afraid to avow what are daily matters of fact. This failure has taken place in creation. . . . . It takes place in Providence.——It takes place in the atonement, &c. p. 105. This assertion may sound startling, but try to evade it as you may, you cannot avoid the conclusion, that the moral government of free agents, in a state of trial, *must* be susceptible of failures. It is a FACT that such failures have taken place; and to attempt to wrest or alter this fact, is to try to change the universe." p. 92.

"The various dispensations of probation are various experiments in moral government, in which God submits his own plans and ways to the acceptance, and for the use of free agents. . . . . These dispensations, or experiments, are capable of failure. The Eden experiment failed—and the Sinai experiment failed. Such susceptibility of failure has been shown to be incidental to a moral government and a state of trial." p. 97.

The author's style is worthy of his logic and theology.

"Sin would have become the pilot of wrecks, without a shore to stand on—the Polyphemus of a valley of dry bones—the real Upas of the universe." p. 27.

"Nature, Providence, and Grace, are three immense wheels in our machinery, the cogs and revolutions of each catching and influencing those of the others, *and all put in motion by the blood of the great atonement*." p. 135.

The blood of Christ has been often trampled on by reckless rhetoricians, but never more grossly than in this revolting metaphor. That Dr. Carroll should admire and imitate the style of such a writer, is not at all surprising; but it is

surprising that he should have exposed himself to the charge of ignorance, by bringing such exploded errors forward as original, and extravagantly lauding, as unheard of and unanswerable, what has been repeatedly advanced and answered within fifteen years. One might suppose, from the Doctor's language, that the church had but just discovered that the atoning death of Christ was an important doctrine, and that, for this discovery, we are indebted to the author of the present treatise. We have no right to prescribe what Dr. Carroll shall be startled and surprised at—*omne ignotum pro magnifico*—but we cannot sympathize with him, either in his lamentations over the ignorance of past ages, or his exultation at the discoveries of the present, respecting “the great wonders of the crucifixion.”

“It is matter of deep regret, that the time and thought, the patience and labour, the intellectual acumen and strength, which, in ages past, have been employed on trifles, or worse than wasted, had not been concentrated on those wonders of the crucifixion which ‘angels desire to look into.’” p. ix.

“But this illusion will not continue long.” God is “training his church to those views of truth befitting her era of coming glory.” p. x.

“The whole intellect of the church must gather round Calvary and tax its gigantic energies in grasping the magnitude, and tracing the relations of that one offering for sin which the Son of God made of himself there.” p. xi.

“The intellect of the church shall be yet trained to see the atonement in a new and celestial light, and in new and mightier relations to earth and to the universe.” p. xi.

“There are yet reserved, glories of infinite mercy, which some mind, favoured of God, shall discover and disclose to the world.” p. xi.

The “gigantic intellect” which has opened the way to these brilliant discoveries, is that of T. W. Jenkyn, whose book is thus described.

“It is a book which may emphatically be said to contain the ‘seeds of things’—the elements of mightier and nobler combinations of thought, respecting the sacrifice of Christ, than any modern production.” p. xiii.

“Characterized by highly original and dense trains of thought, which make the reader feel he is holding communion with a mind that can ‘mingle with the universe.’” p. xiii.

“This volume will prove a star in the east to guide the ‘wise men’ again to the incarnate suffering Redeemer.” p. xv.

“The author has opened a vast and rich mine of thought connected with the atonement, where the *improved mental machinery of the age* may ply its powers with prodigious effect.” p. xv.

“The propositions of the author,” he says, “are confirmed by a train of clear, cogent argument, absolutely irrefuta-

ble." He boldly challenges any body "to show the fallacy of the author's reasoning." "After a careful perusal, let any gainsay it who can." "It will set the long and fiercely agitated question respecting the extent of the atonement, completely at rest"—a book, in short, "for which posterity will thank the author to the latest ages."

These extracts need no comment. The samples which we have given, both of the book and Introduction, will illustrate one another. Nor do we think it necessary, in a case so plain, even to mention the discordance of the sentiments advanced in the one, and recommended in the other, with the standards of our church. Even he that runs may read it. We shall conclude by stating, that Mr. T. W. Jenkyn, in a note, refers to "four Sermons of Dr. Beman on the Atonement," as a wonderful performance, containing what Lord Bacon calls the "seeds of things." And well might he say so; for they contain the "seeds" of every thing in his own treatise. What Dr. Beman put into four ordinary sermons, and Dr. Murdock into one, Mr. Jenkyn has contrived to dilute with words, till it has swelled to a volume of three hundred and thirty-four pages. This may explain what his American patron and admirer means by "highly original and dense trains of thought, which make the reader feel he is holding communion with a mind that can mingle with the universe."