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ARTICLE VII.

DR. ALEXANDER'S MORAL SCIENCE.¹

THERE are two modes of treating ethical science. The first is the Biblical method. It consists in deriving the knowledge of our duties from the revealed Word of God; proving them by citations from the Bible; enforcing them by the promises and threatenings of the sacred volume. This has been the favorite method with recent evangelical moralists in Germany. It has preëminent advantages peculiar to itself. The second mode is the philosophical, and is by some mis-called the rationalistic. It consists in deriving the knowledge of our duties from the constitution and relations of man; proving them by the dictates of human reason and conscience; enforcing them by the rewards and punishments preintimated in the necessary operations of the human mind. This is the method adopted by various English moralists, and in the main by Dr. Alexander in the present volume. We were not prepared to expect that this author would avow in any sense his belief in the following propositions, which have been denominated *neological* by some of his brethren: "Objections to self-evident principles, however plausible, should not be regarded; for, in the nature of things, *no reasonings can overthrow plain intuitive truths*, as no reasonings can be founded on principles more certain."² "It may be thought that this account of virtue makes the moral faculty the *only* standard of moral excellence. In one sense this is true. It is impossible for us to judge any action to be virtuous, which does not approve itself when fairly contemplated by our moral sense."³ "When the mind is in a sound state, and any moral action is presented to it, with all the circumstances which belong to it, the judgment of this faculty is always correct and uniform in all men."⁴ "In regard to sin and duty, the ultimate appeal must be to conscience."⁵ The philosophical method, if properly pur-

¹ Outlines of Moral Science, by Archibald Alexander, D. D., late Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. New York: Charles Scribner. 185.. pp. 272. 12mo.

² Alexander's Moral Science, p. 125. Here, and throughout this Article, we have taken the liberty to italicize for ourselves the more important words in the quotations which we make.

³ *Ib.* p. 136.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 187.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 188. See also pp. 60, 62, 63.

sued, is by no means hostile to the Biblical. Nothing but an error in the philosophy can make it differ from the inspired Word. It furnishes a basis on which a large part of the Scriptural morality would rest, even if misguided men should be unwilling to credit the inspired Volume. In some degree, the science of morals precedes even theism itself. "Although the belief of the existence of God is not necessary to the operations of conscience," says Dr. Alexander, "yet from the existence of this faculty the existence of God may be inferred."¹ Even an atheist remains under moral obligation. The truths of moral science furnish a proof of the Divine existence.

It is useful for every theologian to examine the principles of duty both as they are unfolded in the Bible, and also as they are exhibited in the reason and conscience of man. His theological notions are sometimes inconsistent with the volume of inspiration, and he may often discover this inconsistency by comparing them with that other volume which God has written within the human soul. When the eyes of a divine are turned away from the necessities of a theological party, he expresses his habitual and unbiassed opinion. He does not think, for the moment, of the influence which that opinion would exert upon the favorite creed of his party. That creed may contravene the laws of human thought, as these laws are revealed in language. It may be a creed which he holds as an excrescence to his habitual belief. In examining the principles of duty by the light of human reason, he is often impelled to use such language as the laws of thought demand, and thus to contradict his unscriptural theories.

There is, for example, a dispute among theologians whether all sin and holiness be in their own nature active, or whether some holiness and some sin be entirely passive. The lamented author of the volume now under review has been, we presume justly, ranked among those who believe in the passivity of *some*, and even of our *radical* holiness and sin. It is, therefore, instructive to see that nearly his entire volume is devoted to the moral qualities of *actions*, and comparatively few paragraphs have even an allusion to this moral character which precedes all agency. Why is it so? The passive state is thought to be holiness or sin *par eminence*. It is said to be the source of all other kinds of holiness and sin. All other kinds are imagined to derive their character from this. Accordingly, this should be the prominent object of consideration in an ethical treatise. The main effort of the writer should be to encour-

¹ Moral Science, pp. 87, 88, 55.

age passive virtue, inactive morality. A volume of moral science which confines itself in great measure to the mere exercises which are called virtuous or vicious, should be deemed a superficial work. If it be other than superficial, the sole reason of its being so must be, that the theory of a moral character antecedent to all inward exercises, is a mistake. The structure of all languages demonstrates it to be a mistake. It is an edifying fact that the habitual style in which Dr. Alexander speaks of virtue and vice, is the same which had been previously adopted by the Hopkinsian divines of New England. Our limits will not allow us to quote many of the sentences in which he asserts, as decidedly as our New England theologians have done, that virtue is that "quality in certain actions which is perceived by a rational mind to be good; and vice or sin is that which a well-constituted and well-informed mind sees to be evil."¹ He cites an objection which may be made against his own theory, and this objection is, that "to define virtue to be *only* such actions as the moral faculty in man approves, is to make it a very uncertain and fluctuating thing, depending on the variable and discrepant moral feelings of men."² He explicitly declares that "no judgment can be formed on moral subjects but by the moral faculty;"³ and that "nothing can be considered as partaking of the nature of virtue which does not meet with the approbation of the moral faculty;"⁴ and in the very first sentence of his book he defines this moral faculty to be "the power of discovering a difference between actions as to their moral quality."⁵ He often repeats this definition of conscience as the "faculty by which we can perceive at once the moral character of an act," and as the "judgment of the quality of moral acts." We cannot recall a single instance in which he has unequivocally spoken of conscience as a power of determining the moral character of a passive state. The laws of philosophical language forbid such a definition. There is no moral faculty, then, which can take cognizance of this morality which precedes all moral agency. The whole texture of Dr. Alexander's treatise is pervaded by such remarks as these: "The more clearly we see *anything* to be moral, the more sensibly we feel ourselves under a moral obligation to perform it."⁶ But do we ever perform a "passive state?" "If there is anything clear in the view of a rational mind, it is this, that virtue should be practised, that *what is right* should be done."⁷ Did our author, in

¹ Moral Science, p. 185. ² Ib. p. 191. ³ Ib. p. 187. ⁴ Ib. pp. 190, 191.

⁵ Ib. p. 19.

⁶ Ib. p. 49.

⁷ Ib. p. 52; see also pp. 60, 73—77.

penning that sentence, imagine that we are to "practise" and to "do" an inactive nature? He unequivocally declares that "actions of moral agents are the proper and *only* objects of moral approbation and disapprobation."¹ Samuel Hopkins never propounded the "Exercise scheme" with more decision than this.

We repeat our saying, that Dr. Alexander is classed with the divines who adopt the theory of passive holiness and sin. We presume that he did, in his theological speculations, sanction that error. We only affirm, that he could not found a system of ethics upon it. He must forget it for an interval at least. We perceive that he has, in a few paragraphs of this treatise, resorted to the dogma of a moral state preceding moral acts; but the method of his alluding to it proves that he could not, as an ethical writer, consistently adhere to it. Here is one of his brief allusions to the dogma: "When it is said that the actions of moral agents are the only proper objects of moral approbation or disapprobation, two qualifications of the assertion must be taken into view. The first is, that the omission to act when duty calls, is as much an object of disapprobation as a wicked action." Certainly, we add, for it *is* a wicked action; an act of choice to omit duty. "The second qualification of the statement is, that when we disapprove an external act, we always refer the blame to the motive or intention. But if we have evidence that the agent possesses a nature or disposition which will lead him often or uniformly to perpetrate the same act when the occasion shall occur, we not only censure the motive, but extend our moral disapprobation to the disposition or evil nature lying behind."² We by no means deny that, at the moment of penning these sentences, their venerable author intended to assert that holiness and sin are predicable of the soul's passive nature; that they inhere in an inactive state of which we are unconscious, for he elsewhere affirms that "we are not conscious of the existence of what is called disposition, temper, principle."³ But it is very obvious that he does not, because he cannot, remain faithful to this theory during more than than two or three consecutive paragraphs. It is in general a dormant, passive, undeveloped theory, in some degree similar to passive virtue.

Let us glance at the very passages where, if any where, he ought to be true to his own metaphysical dogma. In his twenty-second chapter, he attempts to prove that "morality belongs to principles as well as acts;" and prosecuting his argument he asserts that "voluntary wick-

¹ Moral Science, p. 89.

² Ib. pp. 93, 94.

³ Ib. p. 148.

edness is nothing else but bringing into act what before existed in principle in the soul." Voluntary wickedness must then be active, and Dr. Alexander is explicit in teaching that in one sense all wickedness is voluntary. "If," he adds, "malice in act is sinful, surely malice in principle must be evil."¹ Now why is this ambiguity of words? We maintain that all malice is sinful. Is there any inactive malice? A malicious principle is a predominant, habitual malicious choice. Why is it said that malice in principle is *evil*, while malice in act is not only evil but also *sinful*? Why is there any hesitation in affirming, if our author habitually believed, that passive (?) malice, being the fountain of active malice, is both more evil and more sinful than its outflowings? Again, our author quotes with approbation the remark of Butler, that "the object of this [the moral] faculty is actions, comprehending under that name active or practical principles."² But is an active principle a passive state of the soul? It is obvious that Bishop Butler means a comprehensive and habitual choice, when he speaks of an active or practical principle.³ In his twenty-seventh chapter, Dr. Alexander proposes to show that virtue and vice do not belong to actions only; but in this very chapter he declares that "the proper seat of moral qualities is not in the will, considered as distinct from the affections, but in the affections themselves." "These internal affections or desires are properly the springs of our actions."⁴ But are not these affections, acts? Are our desires passive? On the very next page our author speaks of them as "actually in exercise." Throughout the chapter he characterizes those moral objects which are not volitions as "exercises of mind." "I feel habitually," he says, "a kind disposition to my fellow creatures, but for much of my time I have not the opportunity of performing any particular acts of kindness. All impartial persons will say that this habitual *feeling* is of a virtuous character; but there is no intention in the case. It is merely a feeling which terminates in no volition or action."⁵ This passive nature,

¹ Moral Science, p. 150.

² *Ib.* p. 152.

³ Bishop Butler speaks habitually of virtue as a "course of life," Works, Camb. Ed. Vol. II. p. 46; and of the "principle of justice" as "the love of our neighbor," Vol. II. p. 167. He says repeatedly that "virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from "the nature of man," Vol. II. p. 15, and that "will and design are the object and the only one of the approving and disapproving faculty," Vol. I. p. 341. He quotes with approbation the adage of Cicero: "Virtutis laus omnis in actione consistit," Vol. I. p. 341. See also pp. 342-348.

⁴ Moral Science, p. 206.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 206.

then, is a disposition, and this disposition is an habitual feeling; but this habitual feeling is an act, and Dr. Alexander admits that it is in some sense voluntary. The question is a narrow one. Is all virtue an act, or a passive state? Our author affirms that it is not an act, and in his chapter intended to prove it, he speaks of joy as a "virtuous emotion." But is not joy an act? Is an "emotion" a motionless, dormant condition? He repeats, "there are exercises of mind which do not involve any exercise of will,"¹ and these exercises have a moral character. But are they not *exercises*? He says that in the maxim "all moral actions are voluntary," the word *voluntary* "includes more than volition; it comprehends all the *spontaneous exercises* of the mind; that is, all its affections and emotions."² Are these passive? Our author speaks of "affections for which we are as responsible as for any *other* acts or operations of the mind."³ Again he affirms in the same chapter: "Our moral character radically consists in our feelings and desires." Can the advocates of the Exercise scheme assert more decidedly, that our moral character does not consist in passive states? Dr. Alexander goes so far as to affirm that these feelings and desires, in which our moral character consists radically, are "the spontaneous actings of certain latent principles." He concedes, then, that our moral character consists, not superficially but radically, in our "spontaneous actings." What need we more? Must we go down for something deeper in the tree than its very roots? Has not Dr. Alexander forgotten his theory of passive sin? He adds: "These [feelings and desires] being the spontaneous actings of certain latent principles or dispositions, this hidden disposition is also judged to be morally evil, because it is productive of such fruit."⁴ Here we have it at last. Here we have a deeper part of the tree than its roots. Here we have the passive sin in a hidden disposition, which is antecedent to all activity. But how long does our author adhere to this tardily uttered theory. Just as soon as certain objections are proposed, this disposition is metamorphosed again into "exercises," "affections" and "habitual feelings" all of which are in their nature active. Notwithstanding all which is said about the heresy of believing that all morality lies in action, our learned author emphatically declares, that "the true and ultimate source of the morality of actions is not found in the will, but in the desires and affections,"⁵ which are acts as really as the exercises

¹ Moral Science, p. 306.

² *Ib.* p. 207.

³ *Ib.* p. 111.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 308.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 189.

of the will are acts. And notwithstanding all that is said about the heresy of believing that all morality lies in voluntary action, Dr. Alexander emphatically teaches that in one sense this is true, and that "we cannot extinguish the animal feelings by an act of the will; they arise *involuntarily*, and *therefore* cannot be in themselves of a moral nature."¹

Thus does error fluctuate in its emergencies and abnegate itself. Thus does every man admit five times what he denies once, in reasoning against any intuitive truth. The only manner in which our revered author gives plausibility to his reasonings, is by changing the meaning of his terms. Thus frequently, in his attempt to prove that moral character does not lie in acts alone, he means external acts.² In that sense we agree with him. At other times he means imperative volitions.³ In that sense we agree with him. Here and there he strives to prove that moral character is not confined to any acts of the will, but extends to "the views and feelings which precede volition," and goes so far as to say: "Indeed if there is one point above all others on which responsibility rests, it is on the motives, that is, the active desires or affections of the mind from which volition proceeds, and by which it is governed."⁴ Thus it is explicitly denied, in the very attempt to prove, that our ultimate responsibility rests on an inactive condition. Here and there too our venerable author speaks of our moral character as consisting in "a state of mind," and the connection implies that this state is passive; but he does not persevere in writing consistently with this phraseology through a single page. He speedily substitutes for it such phrases as "strong desires," which are decided acts, and which indicate that, after all, Dr. Alexander meant habitually and practically, although he sometimes denied theoretically, that this "state of mind" is a state of action.⁵

The volume before us, then, presents conclusive evidence that the

¹ Moral Science, p. 145.

² For instances in which Dr. Alexander uses the term act as denoting something outward, and distinct from volition even, see pp. 112, 113, 127, 138, 139, 208.

³ The work of Dr. Alexander is regarded by some of its admirers, as antagonistical to what is denominated "New England theology." But he must have known that the advocates of "New England theology" do not regard moral character as consisting in imperative or executive volition. Why, then, has he so often used the words action and volition as denoting the merely imperative acts of will? See pp. 113, 136, 139, 149—154, 200—203, etc.

⁴ Moral Science, p. 120.

⁵ See, for one example, pp. 112, 113.

theory of passive holiness and sin, even if it be retained in technical polemical theology, must still be abandoned in practical disquisitions; and that the only question is, not whether all sin and holiness be in their own nature active, but whether they be confined to acts of the will or extended to acts of our other faculties. The doctrine that all moral character consists in exercises, does not *necessarily* imply that it consists in the exercise of any particular power or sensibility, to the exclusion of every other. Dr. Alexander is as really as Dr. Emmons and Dr. Samuel Spring, on the "Exercise scheme" when he so affirms unequivocally: "It is clear, then, that men are more accountable for their motives than for anything else, and that primarily morality consists in the motives; that is, the affections." "The essence of all obedience is internal; that is, consists in the dispositions, affections, and purposes of the heart. Outward actions partake of a moral nature, only so far as they proceed from these internal affections."¹ The question whether these affections are strictly voluntary is a distinct question, on which the advocates of the "Exercise scheme" may differ among themselves, and on which the author whom we now review has, we think, expressed contradictory opinions. We rest satisfied for the present with his reiterated avowal of the "Exercise scheme." That he has also denied it, we are willing to admit.

As the necessities of an ethical system impel its author, if he be a religious man, to leave in the shade all of his impracticable metaphysics, so they tend to amalgamate our conflicting religious parties. It is not to be expected that men who have become habituated to strife, will desist from their wonted course, before the leopard will put off his spots. But they will be obliged to adopt substantially the same principles in their common modes of discussion; and their differences will be either occasional, as when the remembrance of old metaphysical theories instigates a writer to contradict other men as well as himself, or else their differences will be confined to subordinate notions, analyses, explanations, and the use of terms. The eminent author of the volume now before us, has made so many concessions on the subject of human liberty, for example, as, so far forth, to satisfy the sturdiest advocates of the New England theology, a system to which many have supposed him antagonistic. When he says: "Ignorance or error which might have been avoided, never excuses from blame; the same is true of all evil habits and invete-

¹ Moral Science, pp. 140, 257.

rate passions, which have been voluntarily or heedlessly contracted,"¹ he *virtually* teaches, with or without designing so to teach, that all habits, etc. which could not have been avoided, do excuse from blame. When he affirms: "As to those evils which men bring upon themselves by imprudence, intemperance, injustice, or by disobeying the voice of conscience within them, they must be attributed to themselves and not to the constitution of the world,"² he implies that if there be any evils brought upon men otherwise than by their own disobedience to conscience, imprudence, etc., these evils must be attributed not to themselves, but to the constitution of the world. Unless, then, infants disobey their conscience from the first moment of their existence, the evils which they suffer at that moment cannot be said to be their own deserved punishment. Dr. Alexander denies that "infants have reason in exercise;" that they have even what he calls "an obscure exercise of reason."³ He goes so far, we know not on what authority, as to speak of "a child two years old, in whose mind the moral faculty is not yet developed."⁴ On his own theory, then, the evils, if any, which an infant suffers before its disobedience to the moral faculty, must be ascribed not to the infant's ill desert, but to the constitution of the world. A note-worthy concession. By affirming that "no involuntary *action* can be of a moral nature,"⁵ he puts himself under obligation to admit that no involuntary *state* can be of a moral nature, and this terminates all dispute. Dr. Alexander condemns as fatalism the doctrine "that in the circumstances in which each man is placed, he could not be different from what he is;" that man "is what he is by the operation of causes over which he has no control."⁶ Therefore this author, if self-consistent, must admit "that in the circumstances in which each man is placed, he" can "be different from what he is;" and to concede this is to sanction one of the radical principles of distinctive New England theology.

Few writers have reduplicated their emphatic words more than Dr. Alexander, in asserting the freedom of moral agents. If he had formed the definite purpose to outdo the New England divines, in professing a belief in human liberty, he could hardly have used more emphatic phrases. He not only says: "It may truly be affirmed

¹ Moral Science, pp. 67, 71.

² Ib. p. 253.

³ Ib. p. 92.

⁴ Ib. p. 23. If Dr. Alexander means "*fully* developed," he ought to have said so. If he denies all development of the moral faculty in a child of the above named age, he is far more latitudinarian on this topic than the New England divines.

⁵ Moral Science, p. 92.

⁶ Ib. pp. 97, 98.

that every man possesses a self-determining power by which he regulates and governs his own actions according to his own inclinations;"¹ but he also declares that if, in order to be free, man must possess "a self-determining power in itself, independent of all motives, and uninfluenced by any inclination," then, on that supposition, "we should admit the self-determining power of the will, whether we understood its nature or not; for we lay it down as a first principle — from which we can no more depart than from the consciousness of existence — that MAN IS FREE, and therefore stand ready to embrace whatever is fairly included in the definition of freedom."¹ Of course Dr. Alexander does not admit, more than the New England divines, that man possesses this self-determining power; but he says: "We are as certain that we are free, as we can be; a revelation from heaven could not render us more so."² He goes so far as to affirm: "The word, *necessary*, should never have been applied to any exercises which are spontaneous or voluntary, because all such are free in their very nature. When we apply this term to them, although we may qualify it by calling it a moral or philosophical necessity, still the idea naturally and insensibly arises, that if necessary they cannot be free. It is highly important not to use a term out of its proper signification; especially when such consequences may arise from an ambiguous use. An event may be absolutely certain, without being necessary."³ He reiterates the statement that our spontaneous acts are certain, but not necessary. This statement may be expressed in the following synonymous terms: If our wicked spontaneous acts are not necessary, then they are not unavoidable, inevitable; then we can avoid, prevent, abstain from them; then we are not unable to omit them; then it is not true that we must sin, that the motives to sin are irresistible, invincible; that holiness is impossible, etc. Dr. Alexander would not so 'keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope;' he would not trifle with his readers and with "Moral Science," as to affirm that certain moral acts are not necessary, while he would secretly allow the assertion that they are inevitable. We must and do confide in his strict honesty, and believe that when he penned these sentences he did really believe with President Edwards, "that the connection between antecedent things and consequent ones which takes place with regard to the acts of men's wills, which is called moral necessity, is called by the name of *Necessity* improperly, and that all such terms as *must*, *cannot*, *im-*

¹ Moral Science, pp. 111, 112.² *Ib.* p. 100.³ *Ib.* pp. 104—106.

possible, unable, irresistible, unavoidable, invincible, etc. when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, and are either used nonsensically and with perfect insignificance, or in a sense quite diverse from their original and proper meaning and their use in common speech, and that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's will is more properly called *certainty* than *necessity*; it being no other than the certain connection between the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms their existence."¹ It is evident, then, that Dr. Alexander has admitted all that we ever claimed in behalf of man's freedom; and has denied, as fully as we have ever denied, the natural, literal inability of a sinner to avoid transgression.

It may be rejoined, that in other passages he has taught the very doctrine which he disavowed in the sentences quoted above; and that he has implied, if not directly asserted, that "man could not possibly with the same motives have acted differently from what he did."² To this we answer, that if he has asserted or implied that men are literally or properly unable to abstain from their sinful acts, he has contradicted himself as well as the truth; and the contradiction must have sprung from the sudden uprising of an old theological theory, which had lain slumbering under his habitual ethical belief. Such contradictions are not uncommon among men who have been drawn by the force of circumstances, into a system of scholastic metaphysics at variance with their prevailing good sense. We believe, that the well known and excellent judgment of Dr. Alexander did *habitually* reject the doctrine of man's literal, natural impotence to obey God's commands. At the same time we do not deny that, in certain speculative moods, he did accept this dogma.

When men begin to make concessions they are often tempted to go too far. We think that Dr. Alexander has at least used unguarded language in some of his attempts to magnify human freedom. He has written the following unexpected paragraph: "There are some who maintain that all human actions proceed from God, as their first cause, and that man can act only as he is acted upon. Upon this theory, it does not appear how man can be an accountable moral agent; for though his actions may be voluntary, and performed in the exercise of reason, yet as he does not originate them, they can scarcely be considered his own."³ If a New England writer had made this remark, how soon would the puerile cry of Pelagian-

¹ Edwards's Works, Vol. II. p. 293. Dwight's edition.

² Moral Science, p. 117.

³ *Ib.* p. 95.

ism have greeted our ears. What does the remark mean? Did its author refer to our holy acts, and did he intend to say that any man can, in every sense, perform them without their proceeding from God as their first cause? If so, how did he explain his Confession of Faith, which declares that "man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation?"¹ Did he intend to deny that, as a matter of fact, our holy "actions [do] proceed from God, as their First Cause?" If so, how did he explain the Larger Catechism, which asserts, that "Justifying faith is a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God;" and "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities — by working and quickening in our hearts — those apprehensions, affections and graces which are requisite for the right performance" of the duty of prayer.² Or did Dr. Alexander mean to deny that our holy acts are free? If so, what becomes of his oft repeated asseveration, that "whether we can or cannot answer arguments against liberty, we know that we are free."³ But let us make another supposition. Did Dr. Alexander allude to sinful actions merely, when he spoke of "all human actions?" Did he simply intend to deny that our deeds of wickedness originate from the great First Cause? If so, why did he use such general language? Why did he not limit his phraseology to one class of deeds? And why did he not show that holy actions can, and wicked actions cannot, originate from the great First Cause in consistency with human freedom? What did he mean, when he said, on page 95, that even if a man's "actions be voluntary and performed in the exercise of reason, yet if the man do not originate them, they can scarcely be considered his own;" and then on pages 102, 103, that "in judging of the moral quality of an act, we never attempt to go further back than the spontaneous inclination of the mind, and never think it necessary to know in what way this disposition was acquired?" In this last statement he has reaffirmed, as he had previously for substance denied, the old Edwardean principle, that if our actions be strictly voluntary, i. e. performed by the will having a natural power to abstain from them, then they are free and we are responsible for them, whatever be their dependence upon the great First Cause.

But this is not the only instance in which our author, declaring with marked fulness the freedom of man, has seemed to contradict both himself and the truth. He teaches "that the whole force which

¹ Chapter IX. 3.² Questions 72, 76, 182.³ Moral Science, p. 99.

governs man is within, and proceeds from himself. External objects are in themselves inert. They exert no influence; no power emanates from them."¹ "It is evident that a man is not governed by any influence from without or separate from himself, but that the true spring of his actions lies entirely in his own inclinations and will, external things having no other influence than as they furnish objects suited to his appetites and other desires."² Now if our author meant simply to affirm, that no external influence *necessitates* the mind to act morally, he adopted very strong and infelicitous language to express a very obvious truth. But did he not intend what he says, that "external objects are in themselves inert; they exert no *influence*; no power emanates from them?" What then do we mean by the power of truth, the efficacy of the Gospel, the energy of the Divine Word? Has the character of Christ no melting influence? Have the attributes of God no subduing force? Has the doctrine of eternal punishment no influence? Why do all men speak of the "force of truth," the "might of eloquence," the "persuasive strength of motives," the "vigor of appeals," the "overwhelming pressure of outward temptation?" "We should never affect," says Dr. Alexander, "the wisdom of being wiser than the common sense of mankind, where we meet with truths in which all men of sober reflection have been agreed. It is safer to take them for granted, as believing that universal consent in such matters furnishes the best evidence of truth."³ The fact that objective truths have an inviting, inciting, alluring, persuading, inducing, attracting influence; and that objective errors have an enticing, tempting, seducing, instigating influence upon the soul, does not prove that the soul is bereft of all natural power to resist that influence, and has therefore lost its freedom. Dr. Alexander himself is explicit in contradicting his own assertions cited above; for he teaches that a man "may be misled by false appearances, and influenced by wrong motives, but is always governed by some reasons or motives,"⁴ that "whatever may be the consideration which induces a man to act in opposition to strong desires, it must be something which is felt by the mind to have force, and to be such a consideration as ought to influence a rational being."⁵ He gains nothing by asserting that the outward object would have no influence, were it not for corresponding sensibilities of the soul.⁶ So a spark of fire would have no influence in producing combustion, were it not

¹ Moral Science, pp. 107, 108.

² *Ib.* p. 110.

³ *Ib.* p. 207.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 127.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 128.

⁶ *Ib.* pp. 108—110.

for the combustible materials exposed to it. We think that the respected author of the volume before us, would have been saved from the extravagant statements which he is afterwards obliged to contradict, if he had not adopted a metaphysical theory which was at war with his practical convictions, and which, therefore, at times confused his ordinarily clear train of thought; a theory antagonistical to the principle of Bishop Butler that "moral obligations can extend no further than to natural possibilities."¹

A volume of *Moral Science* should contain a fundamental exposition of the nature of virtue, and of the various theories concerning it. Some of these theories are examined by Dr. Alexander, far less thoroughly, however, than by Mackintosh and Jouffroy; and several of the most important and withal the most abstruse theories he does not even mention. Waiving further remark on the incompleteness of his discussion, let us confine our attention, at this time, to his manner of treating the illustrious Edwards.

And in the first place, we think it unwarrantable for Dr. Alexander to confound the opinions of President Edwards on the nature of virtue, with the opinions of Bishop Cumberland. Before describing the theory of Bishop Cumberland, he premises that it "is not essentially different from the scheme of those who make all virtue to consist in disinterested benevolence;" and after having discussed Cumberland's theory, he repeats, that President Edwards's scheme "amounts to the same as that which we have been considering, which makes all virtue to consist in disinterested benevolence," and "it will not therefore be necessary to make any distinct remarks on President Edwards's theory."² Is this fair? Let us state Bishop Cumberland's theory in his own words. Let the reader notice the prominence which the Bishop gives to the moral agent's love of his own personal happiness. Let the question then be asked: Does President Edwards teach any doctrine corresponding "essentially" with the scheme that virtue becomes obligatory by the mere fact of its connection with the virtuous man's happiness? What right has Dr. Alexander to affirm, that the theory of the Bishop of Peterborough is the theory of "disinterested benevolence," and thus to link that phrase with the obnoxious scheme of the English prelate?

The Bishop of Peterborough reduces the laws of nature regarding our duty, to this one proposition: "The endeavor, to the utmost of

¹ Bishop Butler's Works, Vol. II. p. 173. ² *Moral Science*, pp. 163, 164, 169, 170.

our power, of promoting the common good of the whole system of rational agents, conduces, as far as in us lies, to the good of every part, in which our own happiness as that of a part is contained."¹ Again: "The greatest benevolence of every rational agent towards all forms the happiest state of every, and of all the benevolent, as far as in their power, and is necessarily requisite to the happiest state which they can attain, and *therefore* the common good is the supreme law."² Again: "There is no power in men greater, by which they may procure to themselves and others a collection of all good things, than a will to pursue every one his own happiness, together with the happiness of others."³ Yet again: "Therefore the whole force of obligation is this; that the legislator has annexed to the observance of his laws, good [elsewhere defined as happiness]; to the transgression, evil [elsewhere defined as misery]; and those, natural; in prospect whereof men are moved to perform actions rather agreeing than disagreeing with the laws."⁴ Once more: "An action is then understood to be necessary to a rational agent, when it is certainly one of the causes necessarily required to that happiness, which he naturally, and consequently necessarily desires."⁵ Further: "The precepts of justice and of every virtue that can be mutually exercised among men, are shown to be means necessary to every man's happiness, and *therefore* to oblige every man."⁶ Still further: "Nor can I conceive anything, which could bind the mind of man with any necessity (in which Justinian's definition places the force of obligation), except arguments proving that good or evil will proceed from our actions; of which since the greatest is the favor or the wrath of God, their connection with our actions sufficiently shows what it is which his authority commands, wherein consists the true nature of obligation."⁷ Indeed, throughout the bishop's entire treatise it is repeated again and again, not only that all virtue is benevolence, but that benevolence is a good merely because it is useful to to all rational beings, and that the reason why an individual is bound to practise virtue is, that the practice will conduce to his own eternal happiness.⁸ Accordingly, the writer of the Appendix to Cumberland's treatise, opposes that treatise with justice on this ground, that "it seems to acknowledge no other obligation of it [i. e. the law of nature], but merely from the sanction of it, which is self-interest."⁹

¹ De Legibus, p. 16.

² Ib. p. 41.

³ Ib. p. 43.

⁴ Ib. p. 206.

⁵ Ib. p. 233.

⁶ Ib. p. 235.

⁷ Ib. p. 246.

⁸ See pp. 44—46, 53, 71, 180, 181, 189, 203, 204, 212, 272, 273, 276, 277, 280, 328, 335, 336, 339.

⁹ See Appendix, p. 55.

Yet in the face of all these declarations, Dr. Alexander asserts that the scheme of Bishop Cumberland is the scheme of "disinterested benevolence," and is essentially the same with that advocated by Edwards and even Hopkins! He even goes so far as to condemn Bishop Cumberland's scheme, because it does not give sufficient prominence to a regard for self, and he undertakes to prove, as an objection to that scheme, that "a prudent regard to our own welfare and happiness is undoubtedly a virtue!"¹

We do not know what apology will be offered for Dr. Alexander's confounding the scheme of Bishop Cumberland with that of President Edwards, unless it be the following reply of Cumberland. "I will now proceed," he says, "to the solution of that objection which suggests, that the effect of my method of deducing the laws of nature, is that the common good, and consequently the honor of God, and the happiness of all other men, will be postponed to the happiness of every particular person, and be made subservient thereto, as to the chief end. Far be it from me to advance any such doctrine."² And he then proceeds to show that the agent's personal happiness is not his "chief end," but is a "small part" of his "entire and adequate end," that "at the instigation of his own happiness, he first perceived that his Sovereign commanded him to respect a higher end." "Therefore," he says, "when moral writers speak of every man's happiness as his ultimate end, I would willingly interpret them in this sense; that it is the chief end among those which respect the agent himself only." "I conceive the one chief end or best effect, to be composed of our own happiness, and that of all other rational beings, which we endeavor as opportunity offers."³ Cumberland's translator and annotator says: "This our author's scheme, though it raises men's attention to their actions, *first* from regard to their private interest, does not necessarily represent all virtue as only the effects of self-love, or intended ultimately for private good."⁴ The sagacious Bishop then does admit, and so far forth he is at one with President Edwards, that the general good is more important than the agent's personal good, and that the agent's individual welfare is to be prized merely as a part of the universal welfare. He also agrees with President Edwards in affirming, that all virtue is benevolence; that is, as the name imports, "an *act* of the will," and not a dormant state.⁵ He further coincides with Edwards in teaching,

¹ Moral Science, pp. 164, 165, etc. ² De Legibus, p. 270. ³ Ib. p. 275.

⁴ Ib. p. 271.

⁵ See Bishop Cumberland's Treatise, p. 42.

that "the law of nature, or reason weighing the powers of nature, cannot propose to us that which is [naturally] impossible as an end, nor prescribe the making use of such means as exceed the limits of our [natural] power."¹ If we should confine our view to these propositions, we should say with Dr. Alexander, that the Bishop of Peterborough's scheme is identical with the scheme of the New England divine. But Cumberland's theory differs from Edwards's in the following, among other particulars: first, it limits virtue to the love for *rational* beings, while Edwards's scheme extends virtue to the "love for being in general;" secondly, it teaches that the love for all rational beings is obligatory, *because* it involves the happiness of the agent who is thus obligated; whereas Edwards's theory teaches that the love for being in general is obligatory, because it is in itself good; thirdly, Cumberland's theory supposes general benevolence to be right because it is *useful* to the universe, but Edwards's theory supposes general benevolence to be right *in and of itself*.

We have a second objection to the manner in which Dr. Alexander has treated President Edwards. He has arraigned against Edwards the authority of Bishop Butler, and has left the impression that Butler believed in a kind of holiness, which Dr. Alexander himself would admit to be real holiness, which yet has no regard to the general well-being. We confess that Butler has made some assertions which we cannot approve, on this theme. We cannot, for example, say with the Bishop, that "nothing can be of consequence to mankind or any creature but happiness." We are astonished that Dr. Alexander should have resorted to the writer of that sentence, for authority against the Edwardean scheme. But what has Dr. Butler taught, and what theories has he opposed?

I. He sometimes asserts explicitly the doctrine that all virtue is reducible to benevolence. He says: "Thus morality and religion, virtue and piety, will at last necessarily coincide, run up into one and the same point, and love will be in all senses *the end of the commandment*."² Again: "It is manifest that nothing can be of consequence to mankind or any creature, but happiness. This then is all which any person can, in strictness of speaking, be said to have a right to. We can, therefore, owe no man anything, but only to further and promote his happiness according to our abilities. And therefore a disposition and endeavor to do good to all with whom we

¹ See Bishop Cumberland's Treatise, p. 194.

² Butler's Works, Vol. II. p. 180. Camb. Ed.

have to do, in the degree and manner which the different relations we stand in to them require, is a discharge of *all* the obligations we are under to them."¹

If now Bishop Butler, in any other passage, implies that virtue cannot be resolved into the "love for being in general," he contradicts himself; and if he have thus contradicted himself, is it allowable for partisans to represent him as *exclusively* on their side?

II. While Dr. Butler repeatedly insists that "the common virtues and the common vices of mankind may be traced up to benevolence or the want of it,"² he still enumerates some "cautions and restrictions" to which this principle is subject. Is it fair, then, to represent him as a decided *opponent* of the theory which he admits with certain qualifications? After enumerating his "cautions and restrictions," he says: "It might be added, that in a higher and more general way of consideration, leaving out the particular nature of creatures, and the particular circumstances in which they are placed, benevolence seems in the strictest sense to include in it all that is good and worthy; all that is good which we have any distinct particular notion of. We have no clear conception of any positive moral attribute of the supreme Being, but what may be resolved up into goodness. And if we consider a reasonable creature or moral agent, without regard to the particular relations and circumstances in which he is placed, we cannot conceive anything else to come in towards determining whether he is to be ranked in a higher or lower class of virtuous beings, but the higher or lower degree in which that principle, and what is manifestly connected with it prevail in him."³

But what are the cautions and restrictions which Butler applies to the general principle, that all the commandments are comprehended in the one requisition of love? They are of minor importance. In the great essentials, on the great whole, the theory of Edwards may be true, if all of Butler's restrictions be admitted. The Bishop says: "Though the good of the creation be the only end of the author of it, yet he may have laid us under particular obligations, which we may discern and feel ourselves under, quite distinct from a perception, that the observance or the violation of them is for the happiness or misery of our fellow-creatures."⁴ Butler then specifies, first, "pieces of treachery;" secondly, "actions which perhaps can scarce have any other general name given them than indecencies;"

¹ Butler's Works, Vol. II. p. 177. Camb. Ed.

² *Ib.* p. 178. See, for the same sentiment, pp. 167, 168.

³ *Ib.* p. 179.

⁴ *Ib.*

thirdly, "meanness; a little mind;" all of "which in themselves appear base and detestable." On the other hand, "greatness of mind," "fidelity, honor, strict justice are themselves approved in the highest degree, abstracted from the consideration of their tendencies." After these specifications, he adds: "Now, whether it be thought that each of these are [is] connected with benevolence in our nature, and so may be considered as the same thing with it; or whether some of them be thought an *inferior* kind of virtues and vices, somewhat like natural beauties and deformities, or lastly, plain exceptions to the *general* rule; thus much, however, is certain, that the things now instanced in, and numberless others are approved or disapproved by mankind in general, in quite another view than as conducive to the happiness or misery of the world."¹

From these remarks, the following conclusions are obvious: First, Bishop Butler does not after all, positively and without qualification, deny the statement that all virtue is benevolence, but admits that, with some modifying phrases, the statement is true. Again, he is doubtful whether the principle is to be modified by asserting that it is true in *the main*, but like other general truths has some exceptions; or by asserting that the virtues which are not reducible to benevolence, constitute an '*inferior* kind of virtue,' etc., or by asserting that these exceptional and inferior virtues are after all so connected with benevolence as to be considered the same thing with it.' It is singular, that the very paragraph which Dr. Alexander quotes from Butler, in order to prove that Butler rejected the theory afterwards defended by Edwards, contains an intimation that in the main and in some sense, such a theory may be true. He says: "Without inquiring how far, and in what sense, virtue is resolvable into benevolence and vice into the want of it [and Bishop Butler has already declared that it is so in some sense], it may be proper to observe that benevolence and the want of it, *singly considered*, are in no sort the whole of virtue and vice."² If we would save the Bishop from self-contradiction, we must give emphasis to the two words, "singly considered." He did not use them idly. In precise language, the theory of Edwards does not teach, that benevolence "singly considered" is the whole of virtue, but that benevolence "*singly considered*" is the original, ultimate exercise, to the promptings of which all virtue can be ascribed, and that benevolence "*comprehensively considered*" does in fact include all virtuous exercises. Thus he declares: "The *primary*

¹ Butler's Works, Vol. II. p. 179.

² *Ib.* Vol. I. p. 345.

object of virtuous love is being, *simply considered*." "I am far from asserting that there is no true virtue in any other love than this absolute benevolence." "The *first* object of a virtuous benevolence is being, simply considered." "The *second* object of a virtuous propensity of heart is *benevolent* being. A *secondary* ground of pure benevolence is virtuous *benevolence* itself in its object." "Therefore, he that has true virtue consisting in benevolence to being in general *and* in benevolence to virtuous being, must necessarily have a supreme love to God, *both* of benevolence *and* complacence."¹ We are now prepared to remark :

III. Bishop Butler was not intending to oppose the theory which has been, since Butler's death, maintained by President Edwards, and it is therefore unjustifiable to quote his words as aimed against that theory. Butler did not design even so much as to oppose the scheme of Bishop Cumberland, which Dr. Alexander has confounded with the scheme of Edwards and Hopkins. For Butler affirms: "I am not sensible that I have, in this fifth observation [the same which Dr. Alexander quotes as antagonistic to the principle that all virtue consists in benevolence], contradicted what any author designed to assert. But some of great and distinguished merit have, I think, expressed themselves in a manner, which may occasion some danger to careless readers, of imagining the whole of virtue to consist in singly aiming, according to the best of their judgment, at promoting the happiness of mankind *in the present state*; and the whole of vice in doing what they foresee or might foresee is likely to produce an overbalance of unhappiness *in it*; than which mistakes none can be conceived more terrible."² Immediately afterwards, he speaks of the scheme which he controverts, as a scheme limiting all vice to conduct which has "the appearance of being likely to produce an overbalance of misery *in the present state*." And indeed, if he had not affirmed that he was refuting a scheme which confines all virtue to that which is *useful in this life*, he would not be considered as refuting the scheme since called Edwardean; for he is evidently reasoning against some kind of a *utilitarian* theory, and the Edwardean scheme is not *utilitarian*. Butler refutes the doctrine, that all acts are virtuous or vicious, merely as they *tend* to happiness or misery. Edwards afterwards maintained the doctrine, that acts are virtuous not as they *tend* to promote the general well-being,

¹ Edwards's Works, Dwight's edition, Vol. III. pp. 97, 98, 99, etc.

² Butler's Works, Vol. I. p. 347.

but as they are *designed* to please God, and promote the highest good of his creatures; and that acts are sinful when their *aim*, not their mere *result*, is to secure a *partial*, in preference to the *general* good. Edwards would not have sanctioned so much of the utilitarian theory as Butler repeatedly admits; for Butler, among his other unwarranted assertions, makes the following: "Let it be allowed, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good, as such; yet that, when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit, till we are convinced that it will be *for our happiness*, or at least not contrary to it."¹

IV. Dr. Butler specifies as virtues distinct from benevolence, many qualities which do not constitute real holiness. President Edwards wrote his dissertation on the "Nature of True Virtue." He did not believe that all which is called "*natural* virtue," may be reduced to "love to being in general." He means *holiness* by the term "true virtue;" and his theory is, that all those qualities which God has promised to reward with eternal happiness, may be comprehended under the love of benevolence and complacency. Bishop Butler does not confine his remarks to virtue in this precise and strictly evangelical sense. Would Dr. Alexander have admitted that mere "veracity," or mere "gratitude," or mere "self-love" is holiness? Would he consider that every man who is called in common language "just" and "honorable," is a regenerate man? From the virtues which Bishop Butler specifies, it is obvious that he is contemplating an essentially different subject from that which was afterwards discussed by Edwards; and therefore his authority should not be cited as exclusively adverse to the Edwardean scheme. Indeed, we do not suppose that this scheme was ever *distinctly* presented to Butler's mind. His ideas on the nature of virtue were not definite nor self-consistent. We do not claim him as a thorough believer in the theory of Edwards, although he has made more expressions in favor of it than in opposition to it. We deny the right of Dr. Alexander to make his unqualified appeal to Butler as an antagonist to what is now called the Edwardean scheme; for although the Bishop did oppose certain theories which are sometimes mistaken for the Edwardean, yet all his remarks in regard to them show that his own views were inexact and fluctuating. Even Bishop Wilson would refuse to admit Butler as a safe authority on the fundamental doctrine of morals.

¹ Works, Vol. II. p. 163.

We might adduce several other particulars, in which Dr. Alexander has failed to treat with a becoming deference what he calls Edwards's "strange definition" of virtue; a definition which, he says, "has surprised *all* his [Edwards's] admirers," and which he admits in the very next paragraph was the favorite definition of Hopkins, one of the most devoted admirers of the President. Dr. Alexander has not even stated Edwards's definition accurately, but has substituted the words: "the love of being as such" for the carefully chosen words of President Edwards, "benevolence to being in general." *Ultimately* both of these definitions may be reduced to the same meaning, but *directly* and *prominently* they suggest ideas different from each other.

We think that Dr. Alexander's volume gives evidence of an unjustifiable tendency among authors of a certain class, to depreciate the illustrious treatise of President Edwards, on the Nature of Virtue. Thus, a very recent critic draws an unfavorable contrast between the claims of this treatise to be considered the deliberate work of President Edwards, and the claims of the volume on Moral Science to be considered the deliberate work of Dr. Alexander. He says that Edwards's "Dissertation seems to have been a sort of tentative effort, made late in life, to erect a new adamant barrier against a selfish scheme of religion, which then began to inundate the churches."¹ The same Reviewer extols Dr. Alexander's Moral Science, "as fully prepared for the press by him while living, except a few unimportant details," as "in every sense Dr. Alexander's work," and he adds: "This is not often true of posthumous publications. We doubt whether it was true of President Edwards's posthumous work on one important branch of the subject, his Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue."² Thus we are told, as if in disparagement of Edwards's Dissertation, that it was written *late* in life; yet he died in the full vigor of his manhood at the age of fifty-four years. Dr. Alexander's treatise was emphatically written late in life, when he was about twenty-five years older than Edwards was at the time of penning his "Dissertation." Dr. Alexander's volume, we are told, was "fully prepared" by himself for the press, EXCEPT in a few unimportant details." And President Edwards, in his Treatise on Original Sin, desiring to refute one objection of his readers, makes the following historical announcement: "I ask leave to refer them [the readers] to a Treatise on the Nature of True Virtue, lying by me

¹ Biblical Repository and Princeton Review, Vol. XXV. No. 1. p. 20.

² *Ib.* p. 1.

prepared for the press, which may ere long be exhibited to public view." It is a known fact that this treatise of Edwards was published with fewer alterations by its editor, than were made by the editors of Dr. Alexander's volume. But we are again informed that Edwards's treatise was a "tentative effort" to resist a local error. This assertion is at war with the clearest historical facts in the life of Edwards. It was plainly one of his earliest conceptions, and grew out of the natural development of his religious and intellectual experience. In his notes on the mind, written either while he was a student or a tutor in Yale College, may be found pages devoted to this subject, and in them a clear and full development of all the fundamental principles of his system, in its final shape. Let the following statements be well considered.

The first extract will show that he founded his theory on the Bible: "As to that excellence that created spirits partake of, that it is all to be resolved into love, none will doubt that knows the sum of the ten commandments; or believes what the Apostle says, that love is the fulfilling of the law; or what Christ says, that on these two, loving God and our neighbor, hang all the law and the prophets. This doctrine is often repeated in the New Testament. We are told that the end of the commandment is love; that to love is to fulfil the royal law, and that all the law is fulfilled in this one word love."

In natural harmony, symmetry and beauty, he saw an image of holy love. Accordingly he says: "When one thing sweetly harmonizes with another, as the notes in music, the notes are so conformed, and have such proportion one to another, that they seem to have respect one to another, as if they loved one another. So the beauty of figures and motions is when one part has such consonant proportion with the rest as represents a general agreeing and consenting together; which is very much the image of love in all the parts of a society, united by a sweet consent and charity of heart." This harmony and consent in natural things, "is pleasant to the mind because it is a shadow of love." Student-like, he illustrates these statements by various diagrams. In view of such delightful analogies, he remarks: "When we spake of excellence in bodies, we were obliged to borrow the word *consent* from spiritual things. But excellence in and among spirits is, in its prime and proper sense, *beings' consent to being*. There is no other proper *consent*, but that of minds, even of *their will*, which, when it is of minds towards minds, it is *love*, and when of minds towards other things, it is *choice*." He then proves that this consent, in order to be true excellence, must extend to the whole sys-

tem, even to being in general, and then adds: "Wherefore all virtue, which is the excellency of minds, is resolved into love to being; and nothing is virtuous or beautiful in spirits any otherwise than as it is an exercise or fruit, or manifestation of this love; and nothing is sinful or deformed in spirits but as it is the defect of, or contrary to these." He proceeds to show that of "being in general" God is infinitely the greatest part, and therefore deserves our chief and supreme love. From these views he with great clearness develops and vindicates the idea of justice, as an exercise of love to being in general, manifested in dissent from its enemies, and a disposition to oppose and punish them for the defence of the general good. He says: "Dissent from such beings, if that be their fixed nature, is a manifestation of consent to being in general; for consent to being is dissent from that which dissents from being." This he regards as the basis of "Vindictive Justice." He adds: "Justice is no otherwise excellent, than as it is the exercise, fruit and manifestation of the mind's love or consent to being."

Compare with this his final definition of virtue in his Dissertation: "True virtue consists most essentially in BENEVOLENCE TO BEING IN GENERAL. Or perhaps, to speak more accurately, it is that consent, union and propensity of heart to being in general, which is immediately exercised in a general good will."

Is it not plain, then, to a demonstration, that his theory of virtue is one of Edwards's earliest views? We might quote pages of proof of our position, but this brief general reference must suffice. If any man desires full conviction, let him read for himself.

In Edwards's Dissertation, we find no change of principle, but only these early germs full grown and matured. Like the immortal Analogy of Butler, it was the mature result of the reflection and study of a life. It has, therefore, in itself completeness, compactness, symmetry and vitality. This any one will soon discover who shall attempt, first, thoroughly to understand it, and secondly, fairly to answer it. Much as has been said about, and against it, we have never yet had any evidence that its opponents have ever properly endeavored to do either of these two things. They do not write as if they had even begun to sound its depths. Nothing have we ever seen which appears to us more superficial, than the arguments which have been arrayed against it.

Our limits forbid our previously intended prosecution of this subject in the present number. We design at some future time to consider, more at length, the Edwardean theory, and the objections of

Dr. Alexander to it. We now content ourselves with having made a few historical criticisms on Dr. Alexander's mode of treating the greatest of American theologians. That he intended to be unjust we do not believe. That he has been unjust, is only too obvious. We cherish a reverence for the man; but this should not preclude a calm examination of his writings.

ARTICLE VIII.

NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

I. CHAMPLIN'S GREEK GRAMMAR.¹

THE author's aim in this work, as intimated by his title, is to give *multum in parvo*; a commendable object, certainly, but not without its difficulty and its danger. *Dum brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*. Many of the rules in this Grammar have suffered in regard to perspicuity and neatness, by the effort to crowd as much as possible into them. Thus on page 65:

"Reduplication takes place in the perf. and pluperf. which latter tense generally takes, also, the temporal (?) augment *s* before the reduplication) of all voices, and in the perf. mid. or pass., in all verba commencing with a single consonant (i. e. not two consonants or a double consonant) or a mute and liquid, except *g*, and in most cases *γν*, *γλ* and *βλ*.

Rules like these are intelligible enough to the advanced student, already familiar with the facts which they express; but the beginner must find it hard either to understand them or to fix them in his memory.

It might have been an advantage to this work, if a less sparing use had been made of those typographical resources, which are so convenient for giving clearness and distinctness, as well as a more attractive appearance to an elementary grammar.

Though the forms of dialect are inserted, we have found no explanation of the terms *Ionic*, *Doric*, etc., by which they are designated. The word *old*, as a designation of un-Attic forms, is applied improperly in several

¹ A Short and Comprehensive Greek Grammar, with Materials for Oral Exercises, for Schools and Colleges. By J. T. Champlin, Professor of Greek and Latin in Waterville College. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 200 Broadway. 1852. pp. 208.