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ARTICLE VIII.

PARK'S DISCOURSES CONSIDERED HOMILETICALLY AND THEOLOGICALLY.¹

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I.—HOMILETICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

THIS volume has brought and will yet bring great delight to many people. The fourteen sermons which compose it are remarkable for their richness of thought, their learning, and the ability with which they handle the great themes discussed. The graduates of Andover Theological Seminary who were pupils of Professor Park will recognize among them some of the grand sermons to which they listened with such wonder and gratification in the old chapel during their student days. To them it will be a double satisfaction to possess a volume like this, which is both a treasury of wisdom and a memento of happy days. In the Preface it is remarked that these "discourses were preached during the years when the author was delivering his theological lectures. They were connected with his lectures, as they were designed to exhibit certain practical relations of certain theological doctrines, to show that the doctrines were to be revered for their use in religious experience as well as for their harmony with sound reason and divine inspiration." No better description of their real scope and character could be given than these words afford.

From the author's account of them it will be correctly inferred that the discourses possess a double value,—that which belongs to them as sermons, and that which they possess as brief discussions, in popular, untechnical language, of theological doctrines. In our notice of the volume, we would dwell upon these two aspects of it. It is interesting as showing the sort of preaching and theological teaching enjoyed at Andover thirty years ago. Considered as sermons, the discourses also possess great homiletic merit. They are indeed remarkable specimens of pulpit eloquence. The style of composition is that of a consummate rhetorician. We have not discovered an obscure or weak sentence in the volume; while we have found in it many passages of great pith and power. The notes and citations with which the discourses are enriched add much to their interest and value. They make the volume a garden of spices. The author has conformed to the best homiletic rules in the construction of the discourses. They are well worth being studied as models of orderly arrangement. They all have good plans.

¹ Discourses on Some Theological Doctrines as Related to the Religious Character. By Edwards A. Park, D.D. Andover: Warren F. Draper. 1885. pp. x., 390. 6¼×3¾.

A good plan is essential to a good sermon. It makes it easier to listen to the sermon, easier to follow it with attention and pleasure, and, consequently, easier to remember it. Without a plan the sermon has no handles by which to grasp it, no progress of thought, no symmetrical development. Dean Howson, classifying sermons according as they have a plan or not, divides them into two classes, "vertebrate and molluscous." Of sermons of the "molluscous" orders he says, they might be "turned round with little disadvantage and preached from the end almost as well as from the beginning. But sermons of the molluscous kind produce little impression on a congregation for this simple reason, that it is impossible to attend to them. For purposes of real instruction, sermons must be vertebrate. . . . In a good sermon there must be a skeleton, though the skeleton need not be seen."

The name of "skeleton," by which the plan or framework of the sermon is designated, and, perhaps, the undue attention of some preachers to the formal structure of their discourses, have created a kind of dislike in some minds (which has found expression in print) to anything like a visible, carefully arranged plan in the sermon. It is supposed to destroy freedom and spontaneous action of the mind, and to make the mental product as dry and bony and juiceless as the skeleton by which the plan is symbolized. It is a familiar subject for jesting, and many smart witticisms have been uttered about it. All such ridicule, however, is foolish and harmful. A sermon without a plan is sure to be a jumble. In discarding "bones" one makes of his sermon a mass of unorganized stuff. Phillips Brooks, in his valuable "Lectures on Preaching," has well expressed the opinion of enlightened people on the subject. "The true way," he says, "to get rid of the boniness of your sermon is not by leaving out the skeleton but by clothing it with flesh. True liberty in writing comes by law, and the more thoroughly the outlines of your work are laid out, the more freely your sermon will flow, like an unwasted stream between its well-built banks." Similar is the opinion of Vinet. "Order," he says, "is the characteristic of a true sermon."

These opinions of the highest homiletic authorities are supported by the almost universal judgment of men. All classes of people—the uneducated as well as the educated and the cultured—delight in well-planned, methodical discourse. The former require it even more than the latter. Their lack of mental discipline makes them more dependent on good arrangement for a clear understanding of the matter.

It will be remembered by some of our readers that Professor Park filled the chair of Homiletics at Andover Theological Seminary for several years before he assumed the Abbot Professorship of Dogmatic Theology. The Rev. S. C. Bartlett, D.D., President of Dartmouth College, who was a theological student at Andover at the time, has recently published to the world, (see the *Forum* for last September) an interesting account of his teachers and studies while at the Seminary, in which he thus speaks of Professor Park:

"One of the most powerfully educating influences to which I was ever subjected came from Professor Park, then in the chair of Sacred Rhetoric. The exercises under him in the construction and criticism of plans and sermons, the sharp discriminations, careful analyses, and sometimes complete demolition of a discourse, followed by a masterly reconstruction of the whole theme by the Professor, gave me an idea of the true functions of rhetoric—as not merely negative and repressive, but developing and constructive—which I wish could be universally realized, but which, alas, almost never is."

In this volume of Discourses Professor Park illustrates by example the value of those homiletic principles which he once so successfully taught, and which he afterwards set forth to the world in a series of valuable articles published in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA. (See vols. xxviii., xxix., xxx.)

It would be an interesting and profitable study to observe how closely and admirably the teaching of the articles referred to is followed in the construction of these sermons. The plans upon which they are framed are, in every case, well adapted to the purpose of the sermon. There is nothing about them of the mechanical uniformity characteristic of the sermons of preachers confined to one inflexible method. Such men are homiletic machines, whose product grows wearisome. The method of Professor Park is so skilfully varied to meet the requirements of his theme that the contrast in respect to plans presented by successive sermons is sometimes quite striking. Take the first two sermons as examples.

The first one was preached as "An Election Sermon" before the Governor and Legislature of Massachusetts, January 2, 1851, and is a model for such an occasion. Had the "Election Sermon" always been of this type, it never would have been thought unprofitable, and so discontinued. The text was Eccles. ix. 15. "Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man." Its plan is the common one, with an Introduction, Proposition, &c. After a most appropriate introduction, full of delicate humor, in which he defends the application of the text to the Christian ministry, he announces as his subject, "*The Indebtedness of the State to the Clergy.*" In the discussion of this theme the preacher specifies four things, for which the State is greatly indebted to the Clergy, viz.: (1) *For their influence in promoting the comfort of the people;* (2) *For their influence in educating the people;* (3) *For their influence in promoting the political virtues—especially those of respect for the laws, zeal for their amelioration, and love of country;* (4) *For their efforts in promoting Christian benevolence.*

The divisions under which these reasons are drawn out and elaborated are replete with learning and wisdom. Taken in conjunction with the notes, they form a rich treasury of information in regard to the beneficent work of the ministry. Keeping in mind the occasion on which it was uttered, one wonders whether that company of legislators did not conceive a higher respect, and preserve it for the rest of their lives, for that "poor wise man," the minister, concerning whom they heard such things. Certainly it is enough to inspire with courage and self-respect, not to say pardonable pride, the heart of one of these poor wise men, just to read the sermon. Every minister ought to own the volume that he might have

the sermon always in reach, as a moral tonic in seasons of despondency and self-disparagement. The achievements and capability of the ministry for good were never better set forth.

The second sermon in the volume is upon "The Prominence of the Atonement." The text is I. Cor. ii. 2. "For I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The plan of this sermon may be described as colloquial. The apostle is fancied to resume his ministry on earth and to hold converse with us on the principles of his high calling. Some one is prompted to ask him the meaning of his declaration in the text, "We desire to learn its precise meaning in three particulars": (1) "Do you intend to assert that our knowledge is controlled by our will?" that "you *determined* not to know any thing but one?" (2) "Should a Christian minister *out* of the pulpit, as well as *in* the pulpit, know nothing save the crucified one?" (3) "Should every *man*, as well as every minister, cherish and exhibit no interest in anything but Christ?" In the answers to these queries the meaning of the text is ascertained. Regarding the explanation of the text as introductory, the questions and their answers form the Introduction. It is animated and interesting, and prepares the hearer for the consideration of the subject.

The subject is thus announced:—

"Having inquired into the meaning of the apostle's words, let us proceed, in the next place, to inquire into the *importance of making the atonement of Christ the only great object of our thought, speech, and action.*" (Italics ours).

The discussion or "Development" of this subject also consists of three questions and answers.

The questions are: (1) "Is not your theme too contracted?" (2) "Is not your theme too large?" (3) "Will it not prove monotonous?"

Each of these queries is considered colloquially, and sometimes—especially in the discussion of the first—the dialogue is very animated. As a method of bringing out the truth and arriving at a right conclusion concerning the particular points inquired about, it is very effective. We have never received such an impression of the wealth of meaning in the doctrine of the atonement—of what are its implications and far-reaching influence; how in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge—as we have obtained from reading this sermon. As the earnest dialogue progresses, the doctrine under discussion acquires increasing importance, until the whole circle of truth seems to be concentrated in it.

The Conclusion, like the Introduction and the Development of the theme, is also composed of three questions and their answers:—

"Having now stated three reasons," says the preacher, "why it is important to make the redemptive scheme our main object of interest, let us close this discourse with three inquiries into the method of giving the desired prominence to this wonderful scheme."

The inquirer and the apostle are still the interlocutors, and the questions now proposed are:

(1) "In what method shall we resist our natural disinclination to make the grace of Christ so conspicuous?"

(2) "In what method can we avoid both the fact and the appearance of being slavishly coerced into the habit of conversing on Christ and on Christ alone?"

(3) "In what method can we feel sure of persevering in this habitual exaltation of Christ?"

In the answers given to these queries, the "Improvement" or "Application" of the theme discussed (the usual work of the conclusion) is clearly and effectively made.

Another example of a wise departure from the usual method, in view of the exigencies of his theme, is given by the author in the sermon upon the "Sorrow of the Redeemer." His text is Matt. xxvi. 38: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." At the outset he is confronted by a difficulty. It consists in the mystery of the distress experienced by Christ. The *fact* was entirely contrary to what might justly have been expected in view of the character of the sufferer and the circumstances under which he suffered. His constitutional peculiarities, his past character, his moral elevation, the heavenly glory that awaited him, the publicity of his suffering, the good to result from it, the assurance of his heavenly Father's support, his views of death, the union of a divine with a human nature in his one person,—all of these things would lead us to suppose that he would face death with composure. The difficulty which would naturally occur to a thoughtful mind must be considered at length. It is set forth in all its magnitude with minute particularity. Its consideration occupies ten full pages of the sermon.

This seems to be, at first thought, far too much space for an introduction. As a rule this part of the sermon should be brief and carry the hearer rapidly forward to the subject. He is likely to become impatient, and justly so, when it is prolonged. A hearer of John Howe, who sometimes fell into this fault, is reported to have said of him: "He is so long in laying the cloth, that I lose my appetite, and I begin to think there will be no dinner after all." Other great preachers have been chargeable with this fault. But Professor Park is rarely or never so. His Introductions, as seen in this volume of discourses, are usually brief, though very felicitous. Where this is not the case there is good reason for the exception. The sermon upon the "Sorrow of the Redeemer" is an instance. He departs from his usual practice because the matter of the Introduction has an important bearing on his subject, and greatly assists the hearer in understanding it. This fact leads him to shape his plan accordingly. It is not a stiff mould for his thought, but flexible to its requirements.

Most of Professor Park's sermons in this volume are topical. The subject suggested by the text is supported by reasons independent of it. The tenth sermon, however, is an interesting specimen of what is called the Textual Sermon. Its divisions are based upon the words of the text. The text of this sermon is Matt. xi. 5: "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." In the Introduction attention is called to the climactic character of the text, and to the inference it affords that the preaching of the gospel to the poor is rated as

higher evidence of Christ's messiahship than his miracles. The sermon, which follows, exhibits the force of this evidence by setting forth the nature of the gospel, the manner in which it is made known, and to whom it is made known, as declared in the last clause of the text. The second division, which relates to preaching as the method chosen of God for the proclamation of the glad tidings of the gospel, is very rich in thought and suggestion. In it, the surpassing power of oral address, the unreportable, undecaying charm of human speech, the irresistible witchery of the preacher's voice, when touched with emotion and resonant with the accent of conviction, are described with great wealth of illustration and force of reason. If one thinks that the power of the pulpit has declined, or is ever likely to decline, or that the preacher's work will be superseded by that of the printer, and that books and newspapers will take away his office, he may find a cure for his dismal apprehensions by reading what Professor Park here says of the preacher's peculiar power. It is something that is raised above the chance of extinction or permanent decay.

Hardly less interesting is the portion of the sermon that relates to the poor as the class that is specially benefited by the preaching of the gospel. The subject is especially interesting and pertinent at the present time, when the poor seem to be somewhat estranged from the house of God, the ministry, and the gospel. It is a calamity to them and to the church, to have such a state of things exist. Professor Park's sermon is a powerful indirect plea for more interest in their welfare, and contains weighty reasons for their close alliance with the Christian Church, and their acceptance of the gospel.

Lack of space forbids further reference to particular sermons in this rare volume, though others are found in it as worthy of attention as those that have been spoken of. Better models of the homiletic art it would be hard to find. The study of them simply as models will be in the highest degree profitable to the preacher.

II.—DOCTRINAL CHARACTERISTICS.

On turning our attention to the substance of these sermons, we find it to be as satisfactory as their form. It is not the beauty of clouds, but of the domes and pinnacles of a majestic temple, which has riveted our attention. It is not a statue in snow, but in marble from Carrara, which has stirred our admiration. On testing the massive columns of the portico they do not mock us with the hollow sound of wooden pillars, but give the resonance of solid granite. It is a crowning merit of Professor Park's Discourses that the solidity and sweetness of their doctrine appropriately match the symmetry and beauty of their form. The adaptation of such sermons to accomplish the true ends of the Christian ministry has been proved time and again in the Professor's own occasional ministrations. The last series of such discourses as these under review, preached in the chapel at Andover, was the occasion of a revival of great depth among the boys of Phillips Academy. As illustrating the fact that there can be no healthy movement of the religi-

ous feelings except upon the perception of great truths, and that, on the presentation of such truth, the corresponding emotions are inevitable, it is worth while to record that the occasion of this revival was a sermon upon the fate of Judas, embodying much the line of thought in the discourse on Conscience in the present volume.

A careful study of these sermons finds in them a pretty complete body of divinity. The doctrinal discourses, if arranged in order of development in a Systematic Theology, would come in nearly the following order: Sermon III., The Revelation of God in His Works; VI., On the Eternity of God; VII., All the Moral Attributes of God are Comprehended in His Love; VIII., The Design of God in His Work of Creation; IX., The System of Moral Influences in which Men are Placed; XI., Conscience; II., The Prominence of the Atonement; XII., Influences Affecting the Character of Christ Considered as a Man; XIII., The Sorrow of the Redeemer in Anticipation of His Death; IV., The Power of the Gospel; V., Union With Christ; XIV., The Righteous Man's Satisfaction with the Character of God. The mere enumeration of these themes rivets the attention like the first view of a distant mountain system. The interest becomes more and more intense as one comes nearer, and moves among the grandeur of the peaks themselves.

Effective preaching is largely the elaboration and enforcement of four staple themes: the Soul of Man is Great; the Sin of Man is Inveterate; the Justice of God is Impartial; the Compassion of God is Infinitely Tender. All these themes receive ample development in the present volume.

I.—The Greatness of Man.

The greatness of man strikingly appears in his power of discerning the revelation of God in nature. Man is the counterpart of nature. If the universe is God's macrocosm, the human mind is his microcosm. Only of a being of most exalted excellence could it be said that "day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." But the perception by man of the design of God's handiwork, and of the meaning of nature's sublime and complicated symbolism, is not so impressive an exhibition of his greatness as his perception of the moral law. Conscience is the crowning attribute of human nature, and conscience belongs to man as man, independent of his particular stage of development. The perception of obligation to choose the right is as characteristic of the savage as of the civilized man. In speaking of conscience the following sentences at once illustrate this fundamental truth, and bear with great weight on the question of the necessity of a future probation for the heathen.

"Our text [Rom. xi. 14, 15] informs us that pagans as well as Christians have this inward monitor for guiding them into the way of duty. They know what holiness is, for conscience tells them what it is. They know what sin is, for conscience tells them what it is. Our context informs us that they are without excuse, for they have known the right and have done the wrong. (Rom. i. 18-25, 32.) Both our text and context imply that all men, with or without the gospel, have a conscience, and will be judged by the law of

conscience. The missionary goes to the heathen because they have the distinguishing faculties of man; because they have essentially the same moral law which he has; because they are persons, and the law is written on their conscience (Rom. ii. 15); they are a law to themselves, they accuse themselves of moral wrong, or else excuse themselves if falsely charged with moral wrong; they know that men who commit sin are worthy of punishment, and are in daily peril of receiving it. There are thousands and millions in Christian lands who are as ignorant of moral principles as multitudes of the pagans are; but notwithstanding all their ignorance they still retain the power of perceiving what their duty is, they retain the sensibility for remorse in view of neglecting their duty. The cause of missions to the foreign heathen and to the home heathen depends on the fact that these heathen *can*, and *do* apprehend moral truth and moral law. The usefulness of the Christian ministry depends on the fact that the minister addresses his discourses to the conscience of the hearer, and the hearer applies them to his own conscience, and in this way the Spirit of God convicts men, 'in respect to sin and righteousness and judgment.' (John xvi. 8.) The first principles of morals and religion are enveloped in the nature of this moral faculty." (pp. 260-261.)

After dwelling upon the various offices of conscience, the dignity given to a nature by the possession of such a directing power is appropriately noticed.

"It is from this monitor of virtue within us that our nature derives a new dignity. The nature is a noble one because it can be holy and in communion with God. We dare not say that it derives a nobleness from its power to sin and rebel against its Maker; this, however, is a sign of its original affluence. The sun and the stars cannot debase themselves in iniquity. The meanness of man as a sinner results from his greatness as a man. He has an idea of duty. He has a power to perform duty. Brutes have no duty. They are not conscious of a fealty to the right. They have no obligation which they have the power to violate. As the animal moves among material objects, so the human soul moves among spiritual; it comes into contact with responsibility and recompense; it touches that highest of all objects—holiness; it takes hold on judgment, on eternity; it has its senses for the discernment of relations which no poetic fancy can invest with new grandeur—the relations of virtue. As the animal has its protruding organs of sensation, so the human race has its organs of moral feeling, and throws them out—out on all sides, and by them comes into close contact with ethereal natures—the cross of Christ, the throne of God,—throws its organs of feeling out, I say, backward to the first moment of moral being, and forward into eternity, into the scenes of moral reward, of moral punishment, and predicts, like a prophet of the Most High, what shall be hereafter. O come, let us bow down with reverence before that Being who made us in his image! Let us adore that rich Divinity who has placed these jewels within us, and is not impoverished by the gift. If he will deign to superintend a planet made out of rock and dust, if he will bow his glories to the care of the sun that is blind and deaf, and though it shines on others, is itself illumined by no intelligent light; if God will condescend to hold systems of globes in his fingers, and to say of a material universe, 'It is good,' then he must feel an illimitable interest in a man's soul; then, although he may be compelled by justice to resist his desire, yet he must desire to save that immortal nature which will be only beginning to live when all the stars of heaven shall have faded away." (pp. 268-269.)

2.—*The Sinfulness of Man.*

In the sermon upon the text: "God is love," the sinfulness of sin is set forth with remarkable power and by a variety of considerations, among the most effective of which is that relating to its essential nature. Sin is not an accident, but a perversion of man's highest prerogatives. All sin is voluntary and inexcusable.

"The intrinsic evil of sin consists in the fact that it is a preference for the inferior above the superior good,—it is a love of self or the world rather than of him who comprehends in

his own being the welfare, not of the world only, but of the universe also ; it is opposition to general benevolence, to general justice, to him of whom our text affirms: 'God is love.' (p. 180.) "The aggravation of their guilt is that they [sinful men] are in conflict with goodness itself ; they are in direct antagonism to the Impersonation of all pure friendship ; they recoil from a being who not only loves them but is the sum of love. They reject him not only while he is benevolence, but because he is impartial benevolence. If he would love the few more than the many, and if they themselves were among these few, they would not reject him. If he would sacrifice the general welfare to their own sinister aims, they will not rebel against him. But he prefers the higher to the lower interests, the welfare of the many to that of the few: he chooses to promote the holy bliss of heaven, and of the inhabitants of the stars of heaven, rather than to accommodate the narrow policy of selfish men; therefore selfish men discard him. If we had not known him to be love itself, we had been comparatively without sin ; but now we have seen and known both him and his Son, who is the express image of the Father's love, and hence our sin remaineth. The demerit of it he has measured. He has declared that unending punishment is the fit exponent of the sinner's ill-desert." (p. 169.)

The evil of sin is also emphasized by contemplating its natural effects. The very constitution of nature continually forces attention to the importance which God attaches to man's remaining in harmony with his environment ; or, in theological phrase, to his obeying the law of God, and submitting his will to that of the Creator. There is a most impressive solidarity in the constitution of the human race. "One sinner destroyeth much good." (Eccl. ix. 18). A long line of descendants groan under the disabilities imposed upon them by the sin of a single ancestor. Still greater are the blessings made to flow out upon the world from the devoted benevolence of a single person. The theological forms of stating this fact are diverse, but the principle is admitted by all evangelical writers and by none more readily than by representative New England theologians. The following is Professor Park's striking statement of the principle in his sermon on "The System of Moral Influences in which Men are Placed":—

"All the evil men who have ever exerted an evil influence upon us are in one sense representatives of that disobedient man who is described in our text [Gen. iii. 13-19], and who is the head of our entire race. Warriors, incendiaries, marauders, ill-minded magistrates, perverse neighbors, petulant fathers and mothers, have disseminated trouble among their fellow mortals, and have thus carried out on a small scale what Adam began on a large scale. The sin of our first ancestor was the occasion on which it became certain that his posterity would have an evil nature and a sinful character. So interwoven were his descendants with himself that if he disobeyed they would in consequence of their nature and in the exercise of their freedom choose to disobey. It is not a truth peculiar to the Bible ; it is a truth of natural science, that the offspring are like their parent. The lamb has the harmless temper of the genus from which it sprang. So the human soul was fashioned in the image of its maker ; but as our ancestor lost his likeness, the souls of his children have been formed in the image of his own apostate mind. Of the men who believe in his apostasy, one class has deemed it proper, and another class has deemed it unwise, to say that his is imputed to his children, but the two classes have united in the belief that the sin of his children,—the sin for which they are ever blameworthy, because in it they are ever free, may yet be imputed to him in the sense of being fathered upon him as its remote occasion." (pp. 215-216.)

In a note, attention is called to the diverse ways in which this truth has been stated in the creeds. The Westminster Shorter Catechism states it as follows : "All mankind descending from him [Adam] by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression." The cele-

brated clause in the creed of Andover Seminary expresses the doctrine in peculiar phraseology: "In consequence of his [Adam's] disobedience all his descendants were constituted sinners"; and "by nature every man is personally depraved," etc. Bishop Butler is quoted to the same effect: "That the crime of our first parents was the occasion of our being placed in a more disadvantageous condition is a thing throughout and particularly analogous to what we see in the daily course of natural Providence." The occurrence of the word "constituted" in the Andover creed is unique, and indicates a profound difference of philosophy among the parties originally consenting to that document. Under the elastic phrase "were constituted sinners," one party was allowed to regard sin as actually being an attribute of the nature of the new-born child. But it was expressly chosen so as not to exclude others from holding that, properly speaking, sin could not be attributed to a person until he had transgressed the moral law, though there was that in the constitution of things, and in the inborn tendencies of every one of Adam's descendants, which made it certain that he would sin with the first opening of moral activity.

In looking over the heated controversies upon this point, we have been impressed with the failure of the various parties to give due weight to the qualifying clauses of the others, or indeed to their own. Professor Charles Hodge, for example, is a strenuous defender of the strict statement that the sin attaches itself directly to the nature of the new-born child. Yet, when he comes to describe the sin, he takes from the word its specific meaning as ordinarily used. Sin does not have the same significance in the compound phrase, "original sin" which it has in the other compound, "actual sin." Actual sin is naturally followed by remorse; but original sin is defined as a sin which is not properly followed by remorse. For example, Professor Hodge, in the very paragraph in which he speaks of Adam's sin as being the ground of the subjection of his descendants to "penal evil," is careful to assert that there is "no transfer of the moral turpitude of his sin to his descendants": and that "the sin of Adam, therefore, is no ground to us of remorse." (Com. Rom., p. 279.) With such qualifications kept constantly in mind, there might have been less contention between Andover and Princeton in former days than there was. The difficulty in such cases largely arises from the impossibility of imposing upon a word in common use a technical significance differing materially from its ordinary significance. Controversialists, too often forgetting the verbal qualifications employed by their opponents, read into the carefully framed sentences a meaning not intended by the writer; while the writers, being so much more familiar with their own subtle distinctions than the reader is, fail to see how open their words are to popular misunderstanding. Not infrequently this danger increases in direct proportion to the pains with which a sentence has been framed. The very carefulness to express to one's self one's own thoughts throws the reader, whose forms of thought are less rigid, and are cast in different moulds, off his guard.

3.—*The Impartiality of God's Justice.*

Professor Park is a defender of the doctrine that benevolence is the sum of virtue. A proper understanding of this principle is therefore necessary to a correct appreciation of his views concerning retribution and atonement. The following may be taken as representative statements of the theory: "All the free choices of the Most High are comprehended in a single, continuous preference for the largest and highest well-being of the universe." (p. 157.) In other places he explains that God himself is to be included in the universe. No little misunderstanding has arisen from attributing to the New England theologians a disposition to substitute the universe for God as the object of our affection and adoration. But it should be observed that these theologians sometimes use the word universe as comprehending the Creator as well as the creation. This unfortunate use of the word has conveyed a false impression as to their real views. President Finney¹ was more careful than most writers to say explicitly that a benevolent choice had as its object "God and the universe"; thus making the choice a fulfilment of both tables of the law, corresponding to the command to love God with all the heart and our neighbor as ourself. With this caution as to the terms used, one cannot fail to get the true meaning of the following discriminating passage from Professor Park: "His [God's] love is an intelligent affection, not for one man, not for one family or tribe or race or world, but for all beings who can think or feel; a preference for the system above a small part thereof; for the general happiness above an individual's pleasure; for the common holiness above the universal enjoyment." (p. 166.) In postulating benevolence as the sum of virtue, difficulties of expression are encountered in view of the manifold relations of sentient creatures to one another and to their Creator. Amid the conflicting claims of sentient beings in all their diversity of character, how shall universal love express itself? It is easy to see the benevolence which underlies *mercy* and *grace*. Mercy is benevolence, combined with constitutional pity, exercised towards those who are in a state of misery. Grace is that same benevolence exercising regard for evil-doers. In the Christian system the resplendence of divine grace is manifested chiefly in the provisions of the atonement in which God provides a way whereby he can still be just while justifying the ungodly. The most formidable difficulty under the theory that all the specific forms of God's holiness are modifications of benevolence is encountered in the attribute of retributive justice. It is one province of God's retributive justice to inflict evil upon the wicked. Divine justice demands the punishment of the sinner. How can this attribute of God be a modification of benevolence? This is the answer given:

"The benevolence of Jehovah comprehends a hatred of all that is evil, and malevolence is itself an evil,—its very name is moral evil. As the love exercised by Jehovah is a choice of the general rather than of a private good, so its alternate form is a rejection of the private rather than of the general good. His hatred of sin is in its essence the same virtue as his preference for the greater above the smaller well-being of the universe, himself included

¹See BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, vol. xxxiii. p. 384.

in the universe. His hatred of wrong is the same virtue with, and is only the alternate form of his love of right; and right though connected with happiness is distinct from and nobler than mere happiness, as wrong though connected with misery is distinct from and worse than simple misery. Thus the holiness of God is a form of benevolence." (p. 159.)

There is a refinement of doctrine here to which President Finney objected, and to which we suppose both Samuel Hopkins and President Edwards would also have objected. The same refinement reappears in Professor Park's discussion of "justice as a modification of virtue." Professor Park truly says that "the volition to inflict a just penalty on a foe to the common good has the same nature with a volition to bestow a strictly just reward on a friend to the common good. The two volitions are the positive and negative poles of one comprehensive choice. Thus our Ruler is comprehensively benevolent in being just. He is just, not in despite of, but on account of, his benevolence." (p. 160.) He also properly objects to the utilitarian view, which, according to his interpretation, is that "all sin is to be punished not in any degree because it is sin, but entirely because it is hurtful; not in any degree because the punishment is deserved, but entirely because it tends to prevent the future recurrence of sin." This view Professor Park would controvert by drawing a distinction between natural and moral good, which the other writers mentioned do not think it worth while to make.

These other writers were accustomed to say that ultimate good is only found in the satisfaction of sentient being. The law of obligation is that moral beings should choose the highest good, that is, the highest satisfaction of "being" comprehensively considered. Such a choice is morally "good," and constitutes the essence of virtue. Such a choice is beautiful in itself, and is a thing to be admired. The refinement of Professor Park consists in affirming that the *love* of this choice is a higher form of virtue than the *love* of the good of being. In making such a distinction we apprehend that confusion must arise in most minds from a double use of the word "love." Love, as a moral virtue, is a choice of the good of being. One's complacency in virtuous action, or his delight in the virtue of others, is an ultimate fact in sensation which does not wholly depend on the action of the will. Bad men may admire virtue, while the crowning point in God's virtue is not that he delights in Gabriel, but that he loves sinners; and so *our* love is perfect only when we are ready to do good to those that treat us spitefully.¹ We cannot, therefore, regard Professor Park's addition to

¹The following passage from Samuel Hopkins' "System of Theology" sets forth the whole matter very clearly.

"This love of benevolence does not exclude, but necessarily includes, that which is called love of complacency; for he who is good, benevolent and friendly, must delight in goodness. He will not only take pleasure in the exercise of goodness, but will be pleased with benevolence wherever it exists. Therefore a complacency and delight in holiness, or moral excellence, is always implied in holiness. God is therefore represented in the Scriptures as delighting and taking pleasure in the upright, in them that fear him and are truly holy, and delighting in the exercise of loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness. But it ought to be remembered, that love of complacency is not the primary or chief part of holy love; for holiness must exist as the object of complacency, in order to the existence of the

Hopkins's and Edwards's views upon this point as altogether an improvement. The additional refinement seems rather to dim the marvellous and manifest glory of divine justice as seen in the light of the simple original theory, which never fails to set forth in clearest light that the punishment of the sinner is a protective measure dictated by infinite wisdom and supreme benevolence. None, however, have stated the benignity of God, even in the infliction of punishment on the incorrigible, with more force than Professor Park. Some passages already quoted bear on this point, and need not be repeated. (See p. 167.) We need only add the following :

"It is the benevolence of Jehovah which leads him to be severe. Penalties he must threaten in order to arrest the inroads of sin, for sin is ruin ; and what he threatens he must inflict, for he is veracious, and his inflictions will secure the tempted from the guilt into which they would otherwise plunge. To the right hand, further than the imagination can wander, to the left hand, beyond the reach of the quickest and most extended thought, above us and below us, behind us and before us, through all time and eternity, do the influences of his government penetrate. His laws affect all spirits that have been, are, or are to be. If a single edict should be repealed, or a single penalty mitigated, he foresees the havoc which would ensue, and his kindness forbids the abrogation of a single iota of his commands. He is touched with pity for his frail children, who need all allowable motives to deter them from apostasy. He will afflict his enemies because he chooses to defend the cause of virtue against their machinations, and he will banish them from his presence, so that the good and the kind, who will be the real majority of his universe, may be at peace. There shall nothing hurt the conscience or destroy the spirit of repose in the heavenly Jerusalem ; but all shall be serene, and he who is love shall reign in the affection of all the wise." (p. 167.) "This is the depressing thought ever weighing down the soul of the condemned. "We are punished by him who had never disturbed our peace but for the universal well-being. We are in heaviness of heart, because he who once bare long with us could endure our rebellion no longer. Our weariness cometh from the displeasure of one who is never displeased save by evil. Our own reason is our first accuser. Our own conscience is our first avenger. Here is the proof of our villainess : we have caused our own troubles, and our Friend, who is ever compassionate, is not allowed by his infinite goodness to relieve us from them, and his reason for continuing to inflict them is, that he is watching for the welfare of his system.'" (p. 170.)

4.—*The Justice and Mercy of God as Revealed in the Atonement.*

From this view of the author's theory of benevolence, and of justice as a modification of benevolence as exercised by sovereign wisdom in administering the government of the universe, one passes, by natural transition, to his conception of the atonement.

The theory of atonement underlying the sermons of this volume may, for convenience, be styled the governmental. But in this case, as in many latter. And what can this holiness be, which is the object of complacency and the spring of holy delight, but the love of benevolence or goodness? This is the primary and most essential part ; yea, the sum of holy love which implies the love of complacency in its nature ; the latter being a branch and emanation from the former. Therefore, when we think and speak of holy love, benevolence should be the primary and chief idea in our minds, as being the sum of all, and implying the whole ; for holy complacency is complacency in benevolence, and a benevolent complacency. And if we leave benevolence out of our idea of the love of complacency, we have no idea of true holiness ; nor understand the Scriptures, where they speak of holy love in God or creatures." (Works, Boston, 1852 ; vol. i. pp. 49-50.)

See also vol. i. pp. 49, 50, 236, 237 ; vol. iii. pp. 16, 18, 20, 41, 44, 45, 49, 50, 57.

others, the attempt to establish hard-and-fast lines of classification is liable to result in injustice to systematic thinkers. Procrustes' bed is too short for most great thoughts. A great advantage, however, in the governmental theory of the atonement is its comprehensiveness. Within its ample folds the theory can find room for all the shades of truth which are emphasized in other but narrower representations of the case. This theory does not exclude from the objects of the atonement the moral influence of Christ's incarnation, life, and death. But it does not stop with that conception of the Saviour's work. It includes all that and much more. The moral influence of Christ is pre-eminently due to the sacrificial character of his death, together with all that prepared him for that sacrifice. The necessity for such a sacrifice, to support the broken law of God when punishment is remitted and sinners forgiven, was incorporated at the creation into the very constitution of things. God has so made man that, without the shedding of blood, (and all which those sacrifices signify,) there can be no benevolent remission of sin. In the adaptation of self-sacrifice to win the affections of evil-doers, and to sustain the lawgiver's authority, while remitting the just penalty of sin, we recognize an ultimate truth concerning the nature of man and the whole constitution of the moral creation. Here is an idea of God embodied in the moral creation.

To the objection that human governments are all very cumbersome and imperfect affairs, and therefore liable to mislead the public by crude and false analogies, it can be replied, that this liability attaches to any attempt to state so comprehensive a truth as that involved in answering the question, How can God be just, and yet the justifier of sinners? To apply language at all to God as descriptive of his acts and feelings involves the same kind of difficulty. All attempts to describe the modes of God's activity are *anthropomorphic*. All such speaking is after the manner of men. This, however, does not relieve us from the duty of speaking to the best of our ability both upon this and all kindred subjects. The desire so frequently expressed in so many quarters at the present time, to draw all our analogies of the atonement from the laws of "life," is fatally defective in this, that it confuses two entirely distinct creations, the physical and the moral, the world of necessary action and the world of free action. The laws of growth in these two worlds are radically different from each other. Truth is not incorporated into the soul as sap is drawn into the leaf. There is no force in the material creation corresponding to faith in the moral world. Faith is free, or it is not faith. Growth in the physical world is the direct result of necessity, and is wholly dependent on the environment. On the contrary, man is governed by motives. All exhortation implies freedom to respond. Now, however imperfect human governments may be, they make prominent this highest of all the prerogatives of human nature, man's power of choosing and of rejecting good. The attempt in the family, and in the various other forms of human government, to control the free actions of the members by the proper application and presentation of motives, belongs to the very highest form of activity, and properly is made the stepping-stone

from which to look into the more complicated mechanism of the divine government. God is a father; but his family is more numerous than the sands of the sea, and their interests more complicated than the movements of the starry hosts of heaven. God is a sovereign; but he is a sovereign of unflinching love and unerring wisdom whose revealed will is, beyond controversy, supreme reasonableness. It is this faith in the *reasonableness* of God's commands which gives such sweetness to the Christian's obedience, and such terror to the threats of divine displeasure. Standing upon this platform of God's benevolence and wisdom, as expressed dimly in nature, but clearly in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the preacher of the gospel occupies an unrivalled position of influence and authority. Though clouds and darkness may at times surround the throne of God, no man can justly gainsay the wisdom of the message which the preacher brings from the word of revelation.

A few extracts from the sermons under review will show how comprehensive and effective is this representation of the atonement. The theory as stated in another place by the same author ("The Atonement, Etc., Introductory Essay," p. xi.), is, that "the atonement is *useful* on men's account, and in order to furnish new motives to holiness, but it is *necessary* on God's account, and in order to enable him, as a consistent Ruler, to pardon any, even the smallest sin, and therefore to bestow on sinners any, even the smallest favors."

"We cannot fathom the mystery of the pains which our Saviour endured as an expiatory and a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. Our endless punishment would have been an expression of the divine holiness and justice; the Mediator substituted himself for us, and his chastisement was equivalent to our punishment in expressing what would otherwise have been expressed in the sanction of the law. There was a sword uplifted; it was to fall upon us; the Mediator stepped before us, and took upon himself the wound which was a substitute for our death. It was a symbol of the moral penalty deserved by all men. It was a type of the moral penalty which will be suffered by all men who remain incorrigible.

"In considering his work of atonement we must remember two facts: One is, that a system of costly sacrifices for sin was prescribed in the Levitical code; another is, that this impressive system was a type of the one sacrifice on Golgotha. We must remember two other facts: One is, that the Levitical sacrifices for sin were substituted for the penalty threatened in the Levitical law; another is, that the archetypal sacrifice on Golgotha was substituted for the penalty of the moral law, the universal and eternal law of God. We must remember two other facts: One is, that our temporal death and the evils antecedent to it are said to be a *curse* inflicted on account of sin; the other is, that Christ as our representative is said to have '*become a curse for us.*' The word came to Adam: 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake;' the second Adam walked over the ground, and the curse was not turned away from him as he took his painful steps. The innocent suffered for the guilty. His vicarious chastisement was an expiation for our iniquities. It was as well fitted as our eternal punishment would have been to counteract their vicious influence, repair the damage which they would have done to the interests of a pure moral government, uphold the dignity of this government, the sanctity of its mandates, the rectitude of its sanctions. The vicarious chastisement was not merely vicarious, it was propitiatory likewise. It not only removed the obstacles to our pardon, but involved new motives for the pardon. It not only prevented the necessity of exercising justice, but made it both consistent and desirable to exercise grace. It presented reasons for our relief from remorse and its attendant pains. It thus conciliated the terrific power of conscience, and saved it from its instinctive fears. As it propitiated the lawgiver within us, so it propitiated the Lawgiver above us. It

involved reasons for his bestowing a reward upon our Representative, for honoring him with a crown of which the souls of regenerate men are the jewels, for giving him 'the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.'" (pp. 345-347.)

"If under the government of God a man must suffer who has allied himself with transgressors but himself is no transgressor, how much more must men suffer who have been actual transgressors and are as fit for punishment as tinder is fit for the flame. If God will not turn his laws out of their course in order to secure the perfect happiness of a perfect man, much less will he turn his laws out of their course in order to secure the perfect happiness of guilty men. When we reflect on the dignity of our Redeemer, the loveliness of his character, the severity of his pains, the prophecies which he uttered in reference to his own chastisement and the future punishment of men, we feel as sure that incorrigible men will be punished according to their demerit as we should feel if penitent men, instead of being redeemed, had been actually punished according to their demerit. His pains express what their punishment would have expressed. Hence it is fit that he should have anticipated them with dread. They not only hold out a menace to the incorrigible, but they justify the infliction of all the pain which is menaced. They are an expression of the love which explains and is explained by the doctrine of punishment. It is not the mere *sensibility* of love; it is the love which comprehends justice and proves the necessity of it. It is the *principle* of love, and when it promises that 'whosoever believeth on' Christ shall have eternal life, it threatens that whosoever believeth not shall 'perish.'" (p. 348.)

"We cannot sympathize with men who think that the death of our Saviour has been comparatively overrated, and that his terror in view of it was excessive. If his fears were unreasonable, then the colors in which the apostles have pictured his reward are exaggerated. In order to be of equal avail with the penalty which we deserved, the vicarious chastisement must have been overwhelming. The height of the Redeemer's joy in the retrospect of the cross explains the depth of his grief in the prospect of it; the unprecedented severity of his pains gives a reason for the unprecedented magnificence of his reward. He rose so high because he had sunk so low. The superstructure was lofty because the foundation was deep. His death is the central fact occurring between the grief with which it was foreseen and the glory with which it was followed; between the lengthened preparation for it at the Jewish altars and the continued celebration of it in the New Jerusalem." (pp. 351-352.)

"There is a power not only in the multitude of doctrines clustering in the history of Jesus, but also in their mysterious nature. The mind was made for mysteries. It has an instinct for them. It looks up to them, and round about after them. It is awed, humbled, yet quickened by them. From the very depths of the soul comes up a demand for truths that shall be elevated above our facile and perfect comprehension. No teachings retain our permanent interest unless they make a life-long appeal to our curiosity." (p. 113.)

"The mystery of the atonement is, that it quickens, purifies, and at the same time stills and relieves the moral sense, and so commendeth God's love to us that our ill-desert only augments our pleasure in his forgiving it, and the greatness of our former sins only inflames our gratitude to him who rejoices to reward us as if we had uniformly obeyed the law.

"Still, the question remains: How has this marvel been effected? In what sense and way could he who wrought out so great a mystery have been left alone while working it? What was that wonder in heaven which forced him to exclaim, in the hearing of his enemies, that his own God, who had sworn never to desert his friends, had yet deserted him?" "We long to know whether there was no check to the anthems of the angels when they heard the sound of the drawing of the sword of God in heaven, and he lifted it up against the man that was his fellow, and said: 'I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.'" (pp. 114-115.)

"The secrets of the atoning sacrifices are locked up amid the treasures of the knowledge of God, which things the angels desire to look into, but now are they hidden from even the eyes of the angels; which things we shall be learning more distinctly and more gladly while our minds are expanding in their compass and rising to loftier heights in knowledge

through our eternal life. In the darkness of these mysteries is the hiding of the power of Jehovah.

"These mysteries take a hold upon the intellect of man when he would, if he could, escape from them. There is no remission for intellectual wants without the shedding of blood. The cravings of our religious nature can be appeased by no other name given under heaven than the name of the Lamb slain." (p. 115.)

"We do not understand the power of his great office, unless we learn the nature and the vileness of sin; and we have no conception how mean, how detestable sin is, unless we know the needlessness of it, the nobleness of the will which degrades itself into it, the excellence of the law which is dishonored by it. All our studies, then, in regard to the nature of the will, the unforced voluntariness of depravity, the extent of it through our race, the depth of it, the purity of the commands aiming to prevent it, the attractions of virtue, the strangeness of their not prevailing over the temptations of vice—they are not mere metaphysics;—they are studies concerning the truth and the grace of Immanuel, who is *God with us*, and whose name is 'Deliverer,' because he delivers his people from their sins; sins involving the power and the penalty of free, wrong choice; a penalty including the everlasting punishment of the soul; a punishment suggesting the nature and the character of the divine law, and the divine Lawgiver, in their relation to the conscience and all the sensibilities of the mind; and that mind as undying as its Maker. All these things are comprehended in the word 'Jesus.'" (pp. 57-58.)

In laying down this noble volume, we are impressed anew with the shallowness of the depreciatory criticism now rife in many quarters concerning systematic theology. Without knowing what they do, these critics are calling for more fact and less theory in theological teaching. Whereas their opposition should be not to theory as such, but to false theories—to science FALSELY so called. What is ever needed, is, all the facts fitly framed together in one compacted unity. The greatest danger of the church is from half truth, which is really no truth at all. Undue emphasis of man's natural ability teaches positive falsehood concerning his dependence. Too exclusive attention to the severity of God obscures the glory of his goodness. If we suffer our minds to be altogether occupied with the contemplation of the compassion of God as displayed in the atonement, we shall lose sight of that wisdom of God which sets metes and bounds to the operations of the Spirit and to the multiplication of the offers of pardon. Preaching which is continuously effective is far from being a hap-hazard presentation of the isolated facts of the Bible. To maintain his hold upon the public mind, the preacher must think his subjects through. His hearers will be quick enough to form theories and construct systems of theology. The preacher who has a false theory of the plan of salvation, or who aims to have no theory at all, will ere long find many strange birds coming back to claim shelter under his too hospitable roof.

In these days of minute division of labor, one great danger is from the agnosticism of excessive specialization. It is very convenient for the person who knows only one thing to say "I do not know" with regard to everything else and to assume that what he does not know, no one else has ground for knowing. This is what a certain class of scientific men are saying continually. Still, even among scientific men, there must be systematizers, who shall present these separate truths in appropriate combinations. The geologist must appropriate the work of the chemist, the botanist, the

zoölogist, and the physicist, and combine them into one grand whole. Such, too, is the work of the theologian and the preacher. It is theirs to appropriate the results of the lexicographer, the grammarian, the textual critic, the historian, and the philosopher, and to forge them into moral weapons both of offence and defence. The well-instructed layman should learn from the preacher to whom he long listens, how to give a reason for the faith that is in him. This *edification* of Christians, and preparation of them for the defence of the truth when they find it assailed, is an essential prerequisite to the steady advancement of the church. The age cries out for *edification* fully as much as for *evangelisation*. Congregations who never hear the great principles of the atonement discussed, who never have presented to them in systematic form the biblical grounds for believing in the lost condition of the human race and its exposure to eternal punishment, and who are not grounded in the principles of evidence on which we accept the Bible as the final authority in all matters of religious faith, are not prepared to do effective evangelistic work. They are not the congregations out of which will arise the great company of preachers and missionaries needed by the coming generation.